ORATIONS AND ADDRESSES

OF

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

VOLUME I.

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GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

EDITED BY

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

VOLUME I.

ON THE PRINCIPLES AND CHARACTER OF AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS, AND THE DUTIES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS, 1856–1891

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EDITORIAL NOTE

THESE volumes comprise a selection of Mr. Curtis's chief orations and other discourses, from 1856, when he was thirty-two years old, to 1892, the year of his death.

He had often been urged to prepare such a selection for the press. But his modest estimate of the worth of his work, as well as his constant laborious occupations, prevented him from doing so. In 1887 he wrote to a friend who desired him to publish them: — "My addresses are really ephemeral. In such matters I have, what is not very unusual, a disposition to trust my own instinct. But I shall hold the project in view, and please myself with thinking of the millennial day of leisure when I can consider and arrange them."

In speaking of his addresses as ephemeral, Mr. Curtis may have had in mind that many of them dealt with questions of the day which were no longer of immediate concern. But a transient question may be so treated with reference to general principles, and it was Mr. Curtis's habit so to treat them, that the discourse may possess lasting worth; and his speeches have, besides, permanent interest as a contemporary judgment of events and conditions by a high-minded man, whose influence

was felt in the shaping of public opinion and in the determining of public action.

The range of the subjects dealt with in these addresses is wide, but the spirit which pervades them gives unity to the collection. It is the spirit of a lover of his country, firmly convinced of the validity of the fundamental principles of American democracy in its highest sense, and believing, consequently, in the indissoluble connection of morals and politics; it is the spirit of an idealist, tempered by sound reasonableness, and by experience in affairs; the spirit of an independent, well aware of the limits, established by the necessity of party organization, within which independence can be usefully asserted and maintained. Of this spirit of patriotism, of fidelity to moral principles, and of manly independence, the life and character of Mr. Curtis afforded such illustration as confirmed and enforced the lesson of his words.

I have included in the collection a few of the after-dinner speeches in which Mr. Curtis was without a rival, not merely because of their felicity in the expression of sentiment appropriate to the occasions on which they were delivered, but because they had in more than one instance an effect upon public opinion. And I have retained the notes of the applause with which they were received by the audience to which they were addressed, as a characteristic indication of the immediate impression they produced.

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

SHADY HILL, Cambridge, Mass.,
April, 1893.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I

PAGE

I. THE DUTY OF THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR TO POLITICS AND THE TIMES: An Oration delivered before the Literary Societies of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., August 5, 1856 1

II. PATRIOTISM: An Oration delivered before the Graduating Class at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., July 20, 1857 37

III. THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION: A Lecture delivered at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., October 18, 1859 61

IV. THE AMERICAN DOCTRINE OF LIBERTY: An Oration delivered before the Φ. B. K. Society of Harvard University, July 17, 1862 95

V. POLITICAL INFIDELITY: A Lecture, March, 1864 . . 123

VI. THE GOOD FIGHT: A Lecture, 1865–6 149

VII. THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE: A Speech made in the Constitutional Convention of the State of New York, July 19, 1867 179

VIII. FAIR PLAY FOR WOMEN: An Address before the American Woman-Suffrage Association, at Steinway Hall, New York, May 12, 1870 215

PAGE

IX. The Puritan Principle—Liberty under the Law: A Speech made at the Dinner of the New England Society of the City of New York, December 22, 1876 239

X. Puritan Principle and Puritan Pluck: A Speech made at the Dinner of the New England Society of the City of New York, December 22, 1883 251

XI. The Public Duty of Educated Men: An Oration delivered at the Commencement of Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., June 27, 1877 . . . 261

XII. New York and its Press: An Address made at the Annual Convention of the New York State Press Association, at Utica, N. Y., June 8, 1881 . 287

XIII. The Leadership of Educated Men: An Address delivered before the Alumni of Brown University, at Providence, R. I., June 20, 1882 . . . 313

XIV. The Spirit and Influence of the Higher Education: An Address in commemoration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Establishment of the University of the State of New York, and the Organization of the Board of Regents, delivered at Albany, N. Y., July 8, 1884 337

XV. The Puritan Spirit: An Oration delivered at the Unveiling of the Pilgrim Statue by the New England Society of the City of New York, at Central Park, June 6, 1885. 367

XVI. The English-speaking Race: A Speech delivered at the Annual Dinner of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York, November 15, 1887 391

PAGE

XVII. The Higher Education of Women: An Address delivered at the Celebration of the Completion of the Twenty-fifth Academic Year of Vassar College, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., June 12, 1890 . . . 399

XVIII. The University of the State of New York: An Address delivered at the University Convocation in Albany, July 9, 1890. 427

XIX. Education and Local Patriotism: An Address delivered at the Kingston Academy, Kingston, N. Y., June 25, 1891. 457

INDEX. 483

I

THE DUTY OF THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR TO POLITICS AND THE TIMES

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE LITERARY SOCIETIES OF WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, MIDDLETOWN, CONN., ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1856

The following oration was delivered in the heat of the Presidential campaign of 1856, in which for the first time the great political parties of the nation were distinctly divided and arrayed against each other on the question of slavery. In June, Mr. Buchanan had been nominated as the candidate of the Democratic, proslavery, party. In the same month the lately-formed Republican, antislavery, party held its first nominating convention, and selected General Frémont as its candidate.

Never had the aggressions of the supporters of slavery been more constant and violent. Kansas had been invaded by slave-owners, resolved to make it by force a slave State. On the 22d of May, because of expressions in his vigorous arraignment of the slave-power in his speech on "The Crime in Kansas," Mr. Sumner had been brutally assaulted and disabled in his seat in the United States Senate, by a slave-holding member of the House of Representatives from South Carolina. On the previous day, the 21st of May, the town of Lawrence in Kansas was taken possession of by forces in the slave interest, and two free-State printing-offices, the Free-State Hotel, and the house of the governor of the territory were burned. All through the summer the so-called "Kansas War" continued, with desultory violence. The antislavery spirit in many of the Northern States was sluggish. The conservative temper of the North was averse to active resistance.

This speech of Mr. Curtis's brought him at once into prominence as a leader of public opinion. It was widely circulated.* It helped to define the political ideals, and to confirm the political principles of the educated youth of the land. Mr. Curtis took an active part in the campaign, and was one of the most popular and effective speakers at public meetings. From this time forward his influence was powerful in the elevation and purification of the political life of the country.—C. E. N.

* It was published in the New York *Weekly Tribune* of Aug. 16, which had a circulation of 173,000 copies. It was issued as a pamphlet, with a dedication to the venerable Josiah Quincy.

THE DUTY OF THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

GENTLEMEN: — The summer is our literary festival. We are not a scholarly people, but we devote to the honor of literature some of our loveliest days. When the leaves are greenest and the mower's scythe sings through the grass, when plenty is on the earth and splendor in the heavens, we gather from a thousand pursuits to celebrate the jubilee of the scholar.

No man who loves literature, or who can, in any way, claim the scholar's privilege, but is glad to associate the beauty of the season with the object of the occasion, and grace with flowers and sunshine and universal summer the homage which is thus paid to the eternal interests of the human mind.

We are glad of it, as scholars, because the season is the symbol of the character and influence of scholarly pursuits. Like sunshine, a spirit of generous thought illuminates the world. Like trees of golden fruit in the landscape are the philosophers and poets in history. Happy the day! Happy the place! The roses and the stars wreathe our festival with an immortal garland.

Too young to be your guide and philosopher, I am

yet old enough to be your friend. Too little in advance of you in the great battle of life to teach you from experience, I am yet old enough to share with you the profit of the experience of other men and of history. I do not come to-day a mounted general. I hurry, at your call, to place myself beside you, shoulder to shoulder, a private in the ranks. We are all young men; we are all young Americans; we are all young American scholars. Our interests and duties are the same. I speak to you as to comrades. Let us rest a moment, that we may the better fight. Here, in this beautiful valley, under these spreading trees, we bivouac for a summer hour. Our knapsacks are unslung and our arms are stacked. We give this tranquil hour to the consideration of our position and duties.

The occasion prescribes my theme; the times determine its treatment.

That theme is the scholar; the lesson of the day is the duty of the American scholar to politics.

I would gladly speak to you of the charms of pure scholarship; of the dignity and worth of the scholar; of the abstract relation of the scholar to the State. The sweet air we breathe and the repose of midsummer invite a calm ethical or intellectual discourse. But would you have counted him a friend of Greece who quietly discussed the abstract nature of patriotism on that Greek summer day through whose hopeless and immortal hours Leonidas and his three hundred stood at Thermopylæ for liberty? And to-day, as the scholar meditates that deed, the air that steals in at his window darkens his study and suffocates him as he reads. Drift-

ing across a continent, and blighting the harvests that gild it with plenty from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, a black cloud obscures the page that records an old crime, and compels him to know that freedom always has its Thermopylæ, and that his Thermopylæ is called Kansas.

Because we are scholars of to-day shall we shrink from touching the interests of to-day? Because we are scholars shall we cease to be citizens? Because we are scholars shall we cease to be men?

Gentlemen, I am glad that, speaking of the duty of the American scholar to the times, I can point to one who fully understands that duty and has illustrated it, as Milton did. Among fellow-countrymen, that scholar falls defending the name and rights of his countrymen; and one of those countrymen stares at him as he lies insensible, and will not raise him lest his motives be misunderstood; and another turns his back upon his bleeding colleague, because for two years he has not been upon speaking terms with him. Gentlemen, the human heart is just, and no traitor to humanity escapes his proper doom. The sacred story hands down to endless infamy the Priest and the Levite who passed by on the other side. Among gentlemen, this scholar pleads the cause dear to every gentleman in history, and a bully strikes him down. In a republic of free men, this scholar speaks for freedom, and his blood stains the Senate floor. There it will blush through all our history. That damned spot will never out from memory, from tradition, or from noble hearts. Every scholar degrades his order and courts the pity of all

generous men who can see a just liberty threatened without deserting every other cause to defend liberty. Of what use are your books? Of what use is your scholarship? Without freedom of thought there is no civilization or human progress, and without freedom of speech liberty of thought is a mockery.

I know well that a conventional prejudice consecrates this occasion to dull abstractions and timid, if not treacherous, generalities. It would allow me to speak of the scholar, and of the American scholar, in his relation to Greek roots and particles, but would forbid me to mention his duties to American topics and times. I might speak of him as a professor, a dialectician, a dictionary, a grammar, but I must not speak of him as a man. I know that a literary orator is held to be bound by the same decencies that regulate the preacher. But what are those decencies? Is the preacher to rebuke the sins of Jerusalem, or of Philadelphia? Is he to say in general, "Be good," when he sees in what particulars we are bad, and counsel silence and peace, when silence and peace are treason to God and man? Are the liars to cry to the preacher, "It is not your business to denounce lying; we pay you to preach against sin"? But the preachers' Master cried, "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widows' houses." He specified sins and classified sinners. In our day the hot adjuration to a clergyman not to soil his pulpit with politics is merely the way in which the nineteenth century offers him the thirty pieces of silver.

What are politics but the divine law applied to

human government? Politics are the science of the relation of men in human society; and as the Founder of Christianity taught peace and good-will to men, how can the Christian preacher better fulfil his office than by showing how peace and good-will may be introduced among men, and by exposing, in all the terror of truth, those whose policy fosters war and hatred among men? Why does the pulpit command so little comparative respect, but because it does not apply truth to life? When the American people has great sins to account for, the smooth preacher touches with the dull edge of his reproof the sins of the Jewish people. Therefore, with us the lecture-room is more thronged than the church, because the lecturer addresses the moral sense of the people upon their moral interests, and the most popular lecturers are the preachers who are most faithful in their pulpits to God and man—for their cause is one.

What is true of the preacher is true of the orator. I should insult your manhood, I should forget my own, if, in addressing you to-day, and here, I did not say what I conceive to be the duty of the scholar to-day, and here.

First,—of the scholar. The popular idea of the scholar makes him a pale student of books, a recluse, a valetudinarian, an unpractical and impracticable man. He is a being with an endless capacity of literary and scientific acquisition. He is only a consumer, not a producer; or, if so, only a producer of useless results. Learning is supposed to be put into him, not as seed into the ground, whence to spring again, covering the

earth with beauty and feeding the race, but rather as vegetables are thrown into a cellar, where they lie buried, not planted, producing only some poor shoot, pallid and useless.

In the old plays and romances we have the same picture of an absent-minded pedant, the easy prey of every knave, the docile husband of a termagant; who, though he could read a tragedy of Æschylus, could not tie his own shoes. He belonged to the great establishments as an encyclopædia, in the same way that the fool belonged to them as a jest-book. Scholars were popularly ranked with women, having all their weakness and none of their charms.

But in any just classification of human powers and pursuits the scholar is the representative of thought. Devoted to the contemplation of truth, he is, in the State, a public conscience by which public measures may be tested; the scholarly class, therefore, to which now, as of old, the clergy belong, is the upper house in the politics of the world.

Now, there is a constant tendency in material prosperity, when it is the prosperity of a class and not of the mass, to relax the severity of principle. Therefore, we find that the era of noble thought in national history is not usually coincident with the greatest national prosperity. Greece was not greatest when rumors of war had ceased. Rome was not most imperial in the voluptuous calm of Constantinopolitan decay. The magnificent monotony of Bourbon tyranny in France, and the reign of its shop-keeping king, were not the grand eras of French history. Holland began

as generously as America, and Holland has sunk into the imbecile apathy of commercial prosperity, without art, without literature, without a noble influence in the world, and with no promise of the future.

When Napoleon reviled England as a nation of shop-keepers, it was not an idle phrase. Napoleon knew that, both historically and in the nature of the case, it was the tendency of a long peace to foster trade, and that it is the inevitable tendency of trade, which is based upon self-interest, to destroy moral courage. When he said a nation of shop-keepers, he meant a nation whose ruling principle was private gain rather than public good; and the sagacious ruler knew that corruption and cowardice are twins.

The tendency of selfish trade is demoralizing, because its eagerness for peace constantly lowers the moral ideal. The private pocket inevitably becomes the arbiter of public policy. Plausibility supplants honesty, sophistication takes the place of simplicity, and the certain evils of the existing condition are resolutely preferred to the splendid possibilities of progress.

Thus it arises that the very material success for which nations, like individuals, strive, is full of the gravest danger to the best life of the State, as of the individual. But as in human nature itself are found the qualities which best resist the proclivity of an individual to meanness and moral cowardice—as each man has a conscience, a moral mentor which assures him what is truly best for him to do—so has every State a class which, by its very character, is dedicated to eternal and not to temporary interests; whose members

are priests of the mind, not of the body, and who are necessarily the conservative party of intellectual and moral freedom.

This is the class of scholars. This elevation and correction of public sentiment is the scholar's office in the State.

To the right discharge of this duty all his learning is merely subsidiary; and if he fail to devote it to this end, he is recreant to his duty. The end of all scholarly attainment is to live nobly. If a man read books merely to know books, he is a tree planted only to blossom. If he read books to apply their wisdom to life, then he is a tree planted to bear glorious fruit. He does not think for himself alone, nor hoard a thought as a miser a diamond. He spends for the world. Scholarship is not only the knowledge that makes books, but the wisdom which inspires that knowledge. The scholar is not necessarily a learned man, but he is a wise man. If he be personally a recluse, his voice and influence are never secluded. If the *man* be a hermit, his mind is a citizen of the world.

If, then, such be the scholar and the scholar's office, if he be truly the conscience of the State, the fundamental law of his life is liberty. At every cost, the true scholar asserts and defends liberty of thought and liberty of speech. Of what use to a man is a thought that will help the world, if he cannot tell it to the world? The Inquisition condemns Galileo's creed. *E pur si muove*—still it moves—replies Galileo in his dungeon. Tyranny poisons the cup of Socrates; he smilingly drains it to the health of the world. The Church, towering vast in the midst of universal super-

stition, lays its withering finger upon the freedom of the human mind, and its own child, leaping from its bosom, denounces to the world his mother's madness.

I speak, of course, of the ideal scholar, of what the scholar ought to be, rather than of the historical men who have been called scholars; and yet, I think we shall find the man whom we should select from history as the *scholar* as also the *man* who most nearly fulfils the conditions I have mentioned.

In English history, which is also our history, who is the scholar? Is it Roger Ascham, a pedant and a school-master? Is it Ben Jonson, with his careless, cumbrous ease, borrowing his shilling, fighting his duel, writing his plays and his stately verses, and lighting up the Mermaid with his witty revelry? Is it either of the churchmen—even Jeremy Taylor, whose written wisdom breathes like organ music through English literature; or George Herbert, whose life shone with the beauty of holiness? Is it the sad Swift, the versatile Addison, the keen Pope, or the fastidious Gray, noting when crocuses opened and roses bloomed, leaving one poem and the record of a life as inoffensive as that of a college cat; or Bentley, or Porson, or Parr, who made valuable notes on valuable Greek classics; or Dr. Johnson, gravely supporting an aristocratic public policy, while he powerfully and pathetically rebuked aristocratic private conduct? Let the name of Dr. Johnson never be mentioned among scholars without a sad respect; but is he, distinctively, *the scholar* in English history?

There is one man, gentlemen, I have not mentioned.

Your hearts go before my tongue to name him. Technical scholarship begins in a dictionary and ends in a grammar. The sublime scholarship of John Milton began in literature and ended in life.

Graced with every intellectual gift, he was personally so comely that the romantic woods of Vallambrosa are lovelier from their association with his youthful figure sleeping in their shade. He had all the technical excellences of the scholar. At eighteen he wrote better Latin verses than have been written in England. He replied to the Italian poets who complimented him in Italian pure as their own. He was profoundly skilled in theology, in science, and in the literature of all languages.

These were his accomplishments, but his genius was vast and vigorous. While yet a youth he wrote those minor poems which have the simple perfection of productions of nature; and in the ripeness of his wisdom and power he turned his blind eyes to heaven, and sang the lofty song which has given him a twin glory with Shakespeare in English renown.

It is much for one man to have exhausted the literature of other nations and to have enriched his own. But other men have done this in various degrees. Milton went beyond it to complete the circle of his character as the scholar.

You know the culmination of his life. The first scholar in England and in the world at that time fulfilled his office. His vocation making him especially the representative of liberty, he accepted the part to which he was naturally called, and, turning away from

all the blandishments of ease and fame, he gave himself to liberty and immortality.

Is the scholar a puny, timid, conforming man? John Milton showed him to be the greatest citizen of the greatest commonwealth. Disdaining to talk of the liberty of the Shunamites when the liberty of Englishmen was imperilled, he exposed the details of a blind tyranny in words which are still the delight and refuge of freedom, and whose music is majestic as the cause they celebrate. The radiance of those principles is still the glory of history. They still search out and expose the wiles of tyranny, as the light of a great beacon, flashing at midnight upon a mountain-top, reveals the tents of the enemy skulking on the plain.

While the men of Norfolk and of the fens were mustering to march away for liberty—to return no more—he did not stay to conjugate Greek verbs in *mi*, nor conceive that the scholar's library was his post of honor. In words that are the eternal rebuke of every scholar, of every literary man, of every clergyman who, in a day when human liberty is threatened, does not stand for liberty, but cringes under the courtesies of position, Milton cries to us across two hundred years, with a voice of multitudinous music, like that of a great wind in a forest: "I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, notwithstanding dust and heat."

Can you not fancy the parish beadles getting up and walking rapidly away from such sentiments? Can you

not fancy all the noble and generous hearts in the world shouting through all the centuries, "Amen, amen!"?

Gentlemen, the scholar is the representative of thought among men, and his duty to society is the effort to introduce thought and the sense of justice into human affairs. He was not made a scholar to satisfy the newspapers or the parish beadles, but to serve God and man. While other men pursue what is expedient and watch with alarm the flickering of the funds, he is to pursue the truth and watch the eternal law of justice.

But if this be true of the scholar in general, how peculiarly is it true of the American scholar, who, as a citizen of a republic, has not only an influence by his word and example, but, by his vote, a direct agency upon public affairs. In a republic which decides questions involving the national welfare by a majority of voices, whoever refuses to vote is a traitor to his own cause, whatever that cause may be; and if any scholar will not vote, nor have an opinion upon great public measures because that would be to mix himself with politics, but contents himself with vague declamation about freedom in general, knowing that the enemies of freedom always use its name, then that scholar is a traitor to Liberty, and degrades his order by justifying the reproach that the scholar is a pusillanimous trimmer.

The American scholar, gentlemen, has duties to politics in general; and he has, consequently, duties in every political crisis in his country. What his duties are in this crisis of our national affairs I shall now tell you as plainly as I can. The times are grave, and they demand sober speech. To us young men the future of this

country is intrusted. What names does history love, and every honest man revere? The names of those who gave their youth and strength to the cause which is waiting for us to serve it.

Second,—the object of human government is human liberty. Laws restrain the encroachment of the individual upon society in order that all individuals may be secured the freest play of their powers. This is because the end of society is the improvement of the individual and the development of the race. Liberty is, therefore, the condition of human progress, and consequently that is the best government which gives to men the largest liberty, and constantly modifies itself in the interest of freedom.

The laws of society, indeed, deprive men of liberty, and even of life, but only when by crime they have become injurious to society. The deprivation of the life or liberty of the individual under other circumstances is the outrage of those rights which are instinctively perceived by every man, but are beyond argument or proof.

Human slavery annihilates the conditions of human progress. Its necessary result is the destruction of humanity; and this not only directly by its effect upon the slave, but indirectly by its effect upon the master. In the one it destroys the self-respect which is the basis of manhood, and is thus a capital crime against humanity. In the other it fosters pride, indolence, luxury, and licentiousness, which equally imbrute the human being. Therefore, in the slave States there is no literature, no art, no progressive civilization. Manners are fantastic

and fierce; brute force supplants moral principle; freedom of speech is suppressed, because the natural speech of man condemns slavery, a sensitive vanity is called honor, and cowardly swagger, chivalry; respect for woman is destroyed by universal licentiousness; lazy indifference is called gallantry, and an impudent familiarity, cordiality. To supply by a travesty of courage the want of manly honor, men deliberately shoot those who expose their falsehoods. Therefore they go armed with knives and pistols, for it is a cardinal article of a code of false honor that it is possible for a bully to insult a gentleman. Founded upon crime—for by no other word can man-stealing be characterized—the prosperity of such a people is at the mercy of an indignant justice. Hence a slave society has the characteristics of wandering tribes, which rob, and live, therefore, insecure in the shadow of impending vengeance. There is nothing admirable in such a society but what its spirit condemns, there is nothing permanent in it but decay. Against nature, against reason, against the human instinct, against the divine law, the institution of human slavery is the most dreadful that philosophy contemplates or the imagination conceives. Certainly, some individual slaveholders are good men, but the mass of men are never better than their institutions; and certainly some slaves are better fed and lodged than some free laborers, but so are many horses better fed and lodged than some free laborers. Is, therefore, a laborer to abdicate his manhood and become a horse? And certainly, as it exists, God may, in a certain sense, be said to permit it; but in the same way God permitted the slaughter of the

innocents in Judea, and he permitted the awful railway slaughter, not a month ago, near Philadelphia. Do you mean that as comfort for the mothers of Judea and the mothers of Pennsylvania?

History confirms what philosophy teaches. The Eastern nations and the Spanish colonies, Rome in her decline and the Southern States of America, display a society of which the spirit is similar, however much the phenomena may differ. Moral self-respect is the first condition of national life, as labor is the first condition of national prosperity; but the laborer cannot have moral respect unless he be free.

The true national policy, therefore, is that which ennobles and dignifies labor. Cincinnatus upon his farm is the ideal of the citizen. But slavery disgraces labor by making the laborer a brute, while it makes the slaveholder the immediate rival of the free laborer in all the markets of the world. Hence, Tiberius Gracchus, one of the greatest of Roman citizens, early saw that, in a State where an oligarchy at the same time monopolized and disgraced labor, there must necessarily be a vast demoralized population who would demand support of the State and be ready for the service of the demagogue, who is always the tyrant. Gracchus was killed, but the issue proved the prophet. The canker which Rome cherished in her bosom ate out the heart of Rome, and the empire whose splendor flashed over the whole world fell like a blighted tree. Not until slavery had barbarized the great mass of the Romans did Rome fall a prey to the barbarians from abroad.

Gentlemen, it is a disgrace for all of us that in this

country and in this year of our history the occasion should require me to state such principles and facts as these. History seems to be an endless iteration. But it is not so. Do not lose heart. It only seems so because there has been but one great cause in human affairs — the cause of liberty. In a thousand forms, under a thousand names, the old contest has been waged. It divided the politics of Greece and Rome, of England, France, America, into two parties; so that the history of liberty is the history of the world.

As American citizens, we are called upon to fight that battle by resisting the extension of the institution which I have described. The advocacy of the area of its extension is not a whim of the slave-power, but is based upon the absolute necessities of the system. An institution which is mentally and morally pernicious cannot be economically advantageous. To suppose so is to accuse God of putting a premium upon sin. The system of slave-labor, by demoralizing the population and exhausting the soil, absolutely demands expansion.

Of this economical fact there can be no doubt. The State of Virginia, for instance, has a finer climate, richer and cheaper soils, with less expensive means of developing their wealth, than Pennsylvania, or New York, or Massachusetts. At the Revolution Virginia had twice the population of Pennsylvania, much more disposable capital, and the best facilities for external commerce and internal communication. In 1850, the cash value of farms in Pennsylvania was $25 an acre; in Virginia,

$8 an acre. In New Jersey, with a soil inferior to that of Virginia, the average value of farming land is $44 an acre. Governor Johnson, late governor of Virginia, says that at a period not very remote her trade exceeded that of all New England, and Norfolk surpassed New York in the extent of her shipping. At the Revolution, the commerce of Virginia was four times that of New York. In 1853, the imports into New York were $180,000,000, and into Virginia less than $400,000. Lands in Virginia capable of producing twenty-five to thirty bushels of wheat to the acre, and only twenty-four hours by rail from New York, are to be had for a fortieth of the price of similar lands in New York itself.

Virginia is a northern slave State, but a senator from Alabama, the most southern of the slave States, confesses of his own home: "A country in its infancy, where fifty years ago scarce a forest-tree had been felled by the pioneer, is already exhibiting the painful signs of senility and decay apparent in Virginia and the Carolinas."

These are specimens of the statistics which are to be found in books that any man can read. All the travellers tell the same story. They find fat slaves and a starved and exhausted soil. Desolation, like a miasma, broods upon the land.

Extension of area is therefore vital to the system, and we shall find that the political power of slavery in the United States has been constantly directed to the acquisition of territory.

When the Union was formed, the system of slave-

labor existed in all of the States except Massachusetts. At the North, however, it was nominal only; several of the States had provided for its removal, and it soon disappeared. The Constitution carefully forbore to mention the subject of slavery by name; and it is an axiom that every grave state paper is to be interpreted by the well-known opinions of its authors in the matters to which it relates. The difficult points in settling the Constitution were those which relate to slavery. The Convention threatened to be wrecked upon it. Now, we have the opinion of this subject held by the most eminent members of the Constitutional Convention, expressed either in debate upon this very instrument or in some other connection with the same great question. In 1786, George Washington wrote to John F. Mercer: "It is among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law," and by his will he emancipated his own negroes. Thomas Jefferson says, in his "Notes on Virginia," "The whole commerce between master and slave is a continual exercise of the most unremitting despotism on the one part and degrading submission on the other. . . . Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and his justice cannot sleep forever"; and Jefferson introduced into the Congress of the old Confederation the famous and noble free clause of the Northwest Ordinance. Benjamin Franklin was president of the first Abolition Society. In the Convention, Gouverneur Morris, of Pennsylvania, declared it to be "the curse of Heaven upon the State where it

prevailed." Elbridge Gerry, of Massachusetts, said the Convention must be careful not to give any sanction to slavery. James Madison thought it "wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man." And I am glad to say, upon the banks of this river, that two of the great men whom Connecticut sent to that Convention, Oliver Ellsworth and Roger Sherman, both protested against any sanction of the system by the Constitution.

It is evident that the fathers regarded slavery with aversion, and as an institution so temporary in its nature that, although essentially hostile to the very objects of the Union, it should not be a bar to union. But hating it, and convinced of its temporary character, they would not allow the great charter of our liberties to be defiled with its name. Persuaded by the same spirit of concession to a temporary evil, they allowed the slave-trade to continue until the year 1808—then to be terminated, if Congress willed.

But with the beginning of the new government began the debate upon slavery. In the very first Congress Mr. Parker, of Virginia, said that the clause allowing the slave-trade was contrary to Revolutionary principles and ought not to be permitted. Petitions against the slave-trade and slavery began to present themselves. Benjamin Franklin headed an antislavery petition to the First Congress which does the eyes good to read. In the debate upon receiving the petitions concerning the slave-trade, in which the slave party, before the Union was in operation, began with the cry of disunion, James Madison said that Congress might

guard against the introduction of slaves into new territory.

The petitions relating to the subject were generally returned, and the petitioners were in every way reviled and insulted by the rank slave-power.

In 1798, upon the question of the erection of a territorial government for Mississippi, the bill declared that the Territory should be regulated in every respect like the territory northwest of the Ohio, excepting only that slavery should not be prohibited.

Mr. Thatcher, of Massachusetts, moved to strike out the exception and prohibit slavery, in accordance with Jefferson's original plan of prohibition in all new territory, south as well as north of the Ohio. He said, and his words have still the eloquence and pertinence of truth: "We are about to establish a government for a new country. The government of which we form a part originated from, and is founded upon, the rights of man, and upon that ground we mean to uphold it. With what propriety, then, can a government emanate from us in which slavery is not only tolerated, but sanctioned, by law? It has, indeed, been urged that as this Territory will be settled by emigrants from the Southern States, they must be allowed to have slaves. As much as to say that the people of the South are fit for nothing but slave-drivers; that if left to their own labor they would starve."

At such sentiments as these, boldly uttered by an American freeman, when the country was yet weak with a seven years' struggle for freedom, the slave-power shook its head indignantly, and said that such remarks

were very mischievous, and rejected Mr. Thatcher's motion.

The constant threat of disunion, which was freely uttered by the slave-power, had its effect. The national slave-trade was prohibited, but not without clauses which annulled the principle of the bill — for it allowed the forfeited slaves to be sold if a State so decreed.

The slave senators said that, undoubtedly, slavery was a misfortune. Mr. Macon, of North Carolina, said it was a curse; but the country had it and must not talk about it, but endure it. This half-concession of the justice of the antislavery sentiment, the extreme difficulties of inaugurating the new government, and the determination of the slave-power to be humored or to dissolve the Union, gradually silenced the discussion. Even Jefferson closed his mouth. Other questions of immediate importance arose. The war of 1812 was to be fought. Meanwhile, the introduction of new Southern States, especially adapted, as was asserted, to slave-labor, the sudden and immense increase of the cotton interest, only served to resolve the slave-power to make the long silence upon the question the sleep of death.

But in 1819 the volcano began to smoke once more. Then took place the great debate upon the Missouri Compromise. Mr. Tallmadge, of New York, spoke on the occasion for America and mankind. His words have so singular a pertinence to the debates of this day in Congress that I quote a few of them:

"If it is not safe now to discuss slavery on this floor, if it cannot now come before us as a proper subject of general legislation, what will be the result when it is

spread through your widely-extended domain? Its present threatening aspect, and the violence of its supporters, so far from inducing me to yield to its progress, prompt me to resist its march. Now is the time! The extension of the evil must now be prevented, or the opportunity will be lost forever. . . . If the Western country cannot be settled without slavery, gladly would I prevent its settlement till time shall be no more."

Mr. Cobb, of Georgia, fixing his eyes upon Tallmadge, said, as the slave section has always said, that if the Northern members persisted, the Union would be dissolved.

Mr. Tallmadge—let us remember his name, young Americans, with those of our great men—Mr. Tallmadge said: "Language of this sort has no effect upon me. My purpose is fixed. It is interwoven with my existence. Its durability is limited with my life. It is a great and glorious cause, setting bounds to slavery the most cruel and debasing the world has ever witnessed. It is the cause of the freedom of man."

It was the most famous debate in our history. Rufus King frankly declared that it was a question of slave or free policy in the national government. Every argument that has been used in the discussion by the slave-power during the last two years was then presented, and completely refuted by the representatives of freedom. The legislatures of the States especially instructed their representatives how to vote. The country shook as in the toils of an earthquake. The vote was taken, and the slave-power conquered. The slave delegations voted in a body for the bill, and Mr. Pinckney wrote

home, on the day of the decision, "We have triumphed." The slave-power *had* triumphed, because the Congress of a free people had agreed to allow slavery in territory where it had the power to prohibit it, this power being expressly acknowledged by a slave President and a cabinet of which John C. Calhoun was a member. It had extended to a free territory the privilege of representation upon a basis of slaves, thus deliberately preferring the slave system of labor, to which privilege there was not the shadow of claim, and which had been granted to the Revolutionary slave States in consideration of the system which existed there at the time of the formation of the Union and of the great mutual struggle just passed. John Quincy Adams, also one of the cabinet, recorded his opinion that it was a triumph of the slave-power. It was so considered then. Time has proved it since.

At the same time with the passage of the Missouri Compromise President Monroe ceded to Spain the region now known as the State of Texas, in consideration of the territory embracing the State of Florida.

This completed the line of slavery along the Atlantic. The President was reproached by the slave party for thus ceding territory which would allow a free State to lie on the very lines of slavery. Mr. Monroe wrote to General Jackson that the cession was necessary to pacify the Northern sentiment. He knew that having secured Florida to slavery, Texas could be retaken when wanted. General Jackson replied, that "for the present we ought to be contented with the Floridas." *We* meaning the slave-party.

All this is what is humorously termed "a settlement" of the slave question—the slave-power having "settled" the question of the Territories and Texas as the wolf settled Little Red Riding Hood and Little Red Riding Hood's Grandmother. This word "settlement" is the eternal tragical joke of our political history.

For some years after 1820 the subject was not directly vexed, but the resolution of the slave-power never relaxed. If the moral minority from the North ventured a word which favored a decent respect for the principles of our government, the slave-power had only to shake its gory locks and cry "disunion," and the frightened North hurried to abdicate its constitutional rights and moral honor.

In 1835, Mr. Calhoun, the most sagacious of Southern statesmen, opposed the reception of petitions by Congress which alluded to the subject of slavery. Even in the District of Columbia slavery denied the right of petition, because it must, in the nature of the case, deny every natural right of man or of freemen. The moral minority, headed by John Quincy Adams, white-headed patriarch of Constitutional liberty, gave battle. Mr. Calhoun cried "disunion." The slave-power echoed "disunion," and the right of petition was denied to freemen by the legislators they had themselves appointed.

This was an immense victory for the slave-power, for it revealed to them a state of demoralization in the party of freedom. It showed the slave-power that it could accomplish its ends by depending upon the moral weakness of the enemy rather than upon its own numerical strength. The historian commemorates a

national crime when he records that during all these debates the party of freedom had a majority of votes in Congress.

From the moment of this clear perception of Northern demoralization the course of the slave-power has been swift and fearful. Texas was, of course, soon retaken, entailing upon us a war with Mexico, and opening an outlet for slavery which seemed illimitable among the miserable states of the great Isthmus.

During the few subsequent years the national demoralization seemed to be complete. The great American experiment was palpably failing. A republic or government of the majority, whose permanent prosperity must depend upon free labor, was yielding to the policy of slave-labor as a national principle. The Federal government in its most important initiative function, that of making the organic laws of new Territories, was administered exclusively for the benefit of a small privileged class, that privilege resting upon the most odious human crime. The Union had come to mean a league for the diffusion of slavery among men. The Constitution was declared to have been framed to nationalize the system, and was so interpreted. It was perfectly understood that political preferment depended upon subservience to the slave-power. He only could be chief among freemen, he only head of a government which was founded to secure the blessings of liberty, who favored the extension of human slavery.

At the North the whole question was settled by calling it a very difficult question. So closely entwined

were the interest of trade and the slave system that the subject was not allowed to be discussed. The professed abolitionists were reviled as fanatical traitors, and the entire practical silence of the North was justified by saying that the discussion of the subject had only increased the difficulty by inflaming the slave-power; as if, because a burglar may shoot you if you oppose him, therefore burglary must not be mentioned. The question was considered so difficult that it was never asked. We were sinking deeper and deeper in the slough, and, because it was so very hard to get out, we must not even make the effort to escape suffocation. Good manners forbade all allusion to slavery. All places which Northerners and Southerners frequented —Newport, Saratoga, the mountains, among which Liberty was born, and the sea, which is the very symbol of Freedom, across which she has fled a hundred times to found her immortal empire—were silent over the spreading pestilence. The pulpit held its tongue; the press, which in a free land should be the alarm bell of liberty, was muffled. If a man from the free States died for liberty, as Lovejoy died at Alton, he was called a fanatical fool, and Freedom had no other epitaph for her martyr. Other countries to which we superciliously asserted our superiority asked, contemptuously, "What is this Republic which makes cattle of men, and whips women when they grieve that their children are sold away from them?" And we replied, "You don't understand the peculiarities of the situation." We tried to believe that the slave-power regretted slavery, because it said, with every new link of the chain it forged,

that it was a great misfortune. But when the chain was long enough and strong enough, as it had now grown to be, the slave-power deserted the old ground that the system was a necessary but temporary evil, and claimed that slavery was a divinely-appointed missionary system for the Africans—an institution just in itself and profitable for the country.

The two most eminent living statesmen, Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster, protested, indeed, that they were opposed to the extension of slave territory. But Mr. Clay was himself a slave-holder, and a little later Mr. Webster refused to vote to prohibit slavery in free territory.

The slave-power was mad with its own success. Its pride grew purple with audacity. It called smooth, complaisant men in the free States, who forbore to say that slavery was a sin, and who worked hard in the interest of the slave-power, patriots and lovers of the Union—as if a political and commercial union might not be bought at too dear a price. But, pursuing its great end—namely, the absolute numerical control of the federal government—the slave-power tried once more the quality of free-State humanity and patriotism. The Fugitive-slave Bill was passed.

I say no more of that bill than that it manifestly prefers the inhuman letter of the law to the justice which is the end of all law. It was a measure in the interest of slavery and not of freedom, and it was passed under the old threat of disunion from the slave-power. But the North seemed to be eager for shame. The free States hurried to kiss the foot of the monstrous power that claimed the most servile allegiance. Gessler put his

cap upon the pole, the people bowed in homage, and the fainting hope of the world murmured, "Then William Tell is dead."

History is not a series of causeless consequences. Event follows event in time, as minute follows minute in the day. I tell you that if the slave-power had not found itself obsequiously courted by what was called the respectable public opinion of Boston to do its worst wrong in the very shadow of Faneuil Hall, a son of Boston and a senator from Massachusetts would never have been smitten to the floor, unawares and defenceless, for having spoken to a greater issue of the same cause for which Samuel Adams and James Otis spoke, and Joseph Warren fell.

The course of the slave-power was now reckless. There was no longer need of concealment or moderation when its natural enemy was its most servile ally. It resolved to strike one final blow to secure the future and to put the question of slavery extension beyond debate. Human affairs are uncertain. The support it had received from the North might be withdrawn. There might be a reaction. Freedom might resume that actual superiority which it still had numerically in Congress. The circumstances attending the passage of the Fugitive-slave Bill having exposed the entire demoralization of the free majority, it was to be supposed that no resistance would be made to any audacity.

In that spirit, and with that knowledge, the Missouri Compromise was repealed, and all the western territory of the United States, larger in area than all the settled States, was opened to the possibility of slave-labor.

The slave-power threw off every mask of nationality, of common honor, and of common decency. It deliberately did a deed which would have caused an individual to be hooted from the society of honest men and branded as a liar. Its darling doctrine was that the Union is a contract. But a national contract exists only in the honor of the parties, and the slave-power repudiated its honor as it had lost its shame. As a man swindles a friend to support a prostitute who ruins him soul and body, so the slave-power broke its faith with the free States to cherish an institution which has been its physical and moral destruction. Whom the gods would destroy they first madden, and so lawless, so audacious, so appalling, was this assault upon the slavish submission of the free States, that it instantly restored to them their sight, if not their strength, and, God willing, the glad future shall cry that William Tell was not dead but sleeping.

I shall not repeat the history of the Kansas iniquity. You know that every one of the slight pretences of protection for free institutions in Mr. Douglas's bill was immediately destroyed. You know that the bill affected to allow the people of Kansas to settle their own government, and you know that the president of the United States Senate which passed the bill himself led hordes of men from Missouri and controlled the elections against the people of Kansas. You know that the delegates so elected passed laws for the Territory which outraged humanity, common-sense, and the Constitution of the United States. You know that the people of Kansas refused to submit to a Missouri mob.

You know that the President of the United States endeavored to compel that submission by means of the national army. It was the final triumph of the slave-power. Its success could not be greater. The President of the United States orders the army of the United States to force slavery upon a free territory, and while I speak to you the crime goes on. But also while I speak to you twenty millions of a moral people, politically dedicated to liberty, are asking themselves whether their government shall be administered solely in the interest of three hundred and fifty thousand slave-holders.

At last we are overtaken by a sense of the grandeur of the issue before us; but so long did God delay the dawning that good men despaired of day.

Do you ask me our duty as scholars? Gentlemen, thought, which the scholar represents, is life and liberty. There is no intellectual or moral life without liberty. Therefore, as a man must breathe and see before he can study, the scholar must have liberty, first of all; and as the American scholar is a man and has a voice in his own government, so his interest in political affairs must precede all others. He must build his house before he can live in it. He must be a perpetual inspiration of freedom in politics. He must recognize that the intelligent exercise of political rights which is a privilege in a monarchy, is a duty in a republic. If it clash with his ease, his retirement, his taste, his study, let it clash, but let him do his duty. The course of events is incessant, and when the good deed is slighted, the bad deed is done.

Young scholars, young Americans, young men, we are all called upon to do a great duty. Nobody is released from it. It is a work to be done by hard strokes, and everywhere. I see a rising enthusiasm, but enthusiasm is not an election; and I hear cheers from the heart, but cheers are not votes. Every man must labor with his neighbor—in the street, at the plough, at the bench, early and late, at home and abroad. Generally we are concerned, in elections, with the measures of government. This time it is with the essential principle of government itself. Therefore there must be no doubt about our leader. He must not prevaricate, or stand in the fog, or use terms to court popular favor, which every demagogue and traitor has always used. If he says he favors the interest of the whole country, let him frankly say whether he thinks the interest of the whole country demands the extension of slavery. If he declares for the Union, let him say whether he means a Union for freedom or for slavery. If he swear by the Constitution, let him state, so that the humblest free laborer can hear and understand, whether he believes the Constitution means to prefer slave labor to free labor in the national representation of the Territories. Ask him as an honest man, in a great crisis, if he be for the Union, the Constitution, and slavery extension, or for "*Liberty* and union, now and forever, one and inseparable."

Scholars, you would like to loiter in the pleasant paths of study. Every man loves his ease—loves to please his taste. But into how many homes along this lovely valley came the news of Lexington and Bunker

Hill eighty years ago; and young men like us, studious, fond of leisure, young lovers, young husbands, young brothers, and sons, knew that they must forsake the wooded hillside, the river meadows golden with harvest, the twilight walk along the river, the summer Sunday in the old church, parents, wife, child, mistress, and go away to uncertain war. Putnam heard the call at his plough, and turned to go without waiting. Wooster heard it and obeyed.

Not less lovely in those days was this peaceful valley, not less soft this summer air. Life was as dear, and love as beautiful, to those young men as to us who stand upon their graves. But because they were so dear and beautiful those men went out, bravely to fight for them and fall. Through these very streets they marched, who never returned. They fell and were buried; but they can never die. Not sweeter are the flowers that make your valley fair, not greener are the pines that give your river its name, than the memory of the brave men who died for freedom. And yet no victim of those days, sleeping under the green sod of Connecticut, is more truly a martyr of Liberty than every murdered man whose bones lie bleaching in this summer sun upon the silent plains of Kansas.

Gentlemen, while we read history we make history. Because our fathers fought in this great cause, we must not hope to escape fighting. Because two thousand years ago Leonidas stood against Xerxes, we must not suppose that Xerxes was slain, nor, thank God! that Leonidas is not immortal. Every great crisis of human history is a pass of Thermopylæ, and there is always a

Leonidas and his three hundred to die in it, if they cannot conquer. And so long as Liberty has one martyr, so long as one drop of blood is poured out for her, so long from that single drop of bloody sweat of the agony of humanity shall spring hosts as countless as the forest leaves and mighty as the sea.

Brothers! the call has come to us. I bring it to you in these calm retreats. I summon you to the great fight of Freedom. I call upon you to say with your voices, whenever the occasion offers, and with your votes when the day comes, that upon these fertile fields of Kansas, in the very heart of the continent, the upas-tree of slavery, dripping death-dews upon national prosperity and upon free labor, shall never be planted. I call upon you to plant there the palm of peace, the vine and the olive of a Christian civilization. I call upon you to determine whether this great experiment of human freedom, which has been the scorn of despotism, shall, by its failure, be also our sin and shame. I call upon you to defend the hope of the world.

The voice of our brothers who are bleeding, no less than of our fathers who bled, summons us to this battle. Shall the children of unborn generations, clustering over that vast western empire, rise up and call us blessed or cursed? Here are our Marathon and Lexington; here are our heroic fields. The hearts of all good men beat with us. The fight is fierce—the issue is with God. But God is good.

II

PATRIOTISM

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE GRADUATING CLASS AT UNION COLLEGE, SCHENECTADY, N. Y., JULY 20, 1857

The following oration, first delivered before the graduating class at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., on July 20th, 1857, was repeated, on July 29th, before the Literary Societies of Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H.; on July 31st, at the Normal School in Westfield, Mass.; and on September 3d, at Brown University, Providence, R. I. It was published in the New York *Tribune*, September 4th, and in the *Anti-Slavery Standard*, September 12th.

The year which had passed since the delivery of the preceding oration had been marked by the election of Mr. Buchanan, the proslavery candidate, to the Presidency, and by the decision of the Dred Scott case in the Supreme Court of the United States. Chief Justice Taney had read his opinion in the case on March 6th, two days after the inauguration of Mr. Buchanan—an opinion in which it was declared that negroes were not citizens under the Constitution, and that Congress had no right to prohibit slavery in the Territories. The infamous Fugitive-slave Law was in operation. The power of slavery had never been so firmly established or so threatening. The governor of South Carolina had recommended, in a message to the Legislature, the reopening of the slave-trade.

But the antislavery sentiment of the North was growing in intensity in proportion to the aggressive action and apparent success of the upholders of slavery. And in confirming this sentiment Mr. Curtis was engaged.

PATRIOTISM

GENTLEMEN: — Day by day, wherever our homes may be in this great land, we have watched the passing pageant of the year. Day by day, from the first quick flush of April, through the deeper green and richer bloom of May and June, we have seen the advancing season develop and increase until, at last, among roses and golden grain, the year stood perfect in midsummer splendor.

As you have contemplated the brief glory of our summer, where the clover almost blooms out of snowdrifts and the red apples drop almost with the white blossoms, you have, perhaps, remembered that the flower upon the tree was only the ornament of a moment, a brilliant part of the process by which the fruit was formed, and that the perfect fruit itself was but the seed-vessel by which the race of the tree was continued from year to year.

Then, have you followed the exquisite analogy—that youth is the aromatic flower upon the tree; the grave life of maturer years its sober, solid fruit; and the principles and character deposited by that life the seeds by which the glory of this race, also, is perpetuated?

The flower in your hand fades while you look at it; the dream that allures you glimmers and is gone. But both flower and dream, like youth itself, are buds and prophecies. For where, without the perfumed blooming of the spring orchards all over the hills and among the valleys of New England and New York, would the happy harvests of New York and New England be? and where, without the dreams of the young men lighting the future with human possibility, would be the deeds of the old men dignifying the past with human achievement?

Gentlemen, how deeply does it become us to trust in the promise of youth and to believe in its fulfilment—us, who are not only young ourselves, but living with the youth of the youngest nation in history.

I congratulate you that you are young; I congratulate you that you are Americans.

Life is beginning for us; but the life of every nation, as of every individual, is a battle, and the victory is to those who fight with faith and undespairing devotion. Knowing that nothing is worth fighting for at all unless God reigns, let us believe at least as much in the goodness of God as we do in the dexterity of the Devil. And, viewing this prodigious spectacle of our country —this hope of humanity—this young America, *our* America, taking the sun full in the front, and making for the future as boldly and blithely as the young David for Goliath—let us believe in our own hopes with all our hearts, and out of that faith shall spring the fact that David, and not Goliath, is to win the day.

Only by the religious resolution of every successive generation of young Americans shall the great ideas out

of which America sprang, the cardinal principles of religious and civil liberty, still guide and determine the development of its destiny.

To-day, therefore, we turn to no black-letter lore. Scholars do not need to hear of the value of scholarship. The finest scholarship is but a single grace of the *man*. How can the *man* best be developed in America? That is a question to which the Future bends its ear. Let us, then, look at the tie which binds us to that country, and consider the nature, responsibility, and duties of Patriotism.

It was not his olive-valleys and almond-groves which made the Greece of the Greek. It was not for his apple-orchards or potato-fields that the farmers of New England and New York left their ploughs in the furrows and marched to Bunker Hill, to Bennington, to Saratoga. The rains fall, the earth yields, fruits ripen, and the world is fair, whether George is King or James is President; whether armies are marching to shoot and slay, or troops of children laugh in the meadows, picking buttercups and daisies.

When we speak of Greece, our chief interest is not in a certain number of square miles of ground—so much water, so many trees—it is not geographical or botanical or geological; but it is in our association with the history of a people and a certain character that we call Greek: so with the French, the Italian, the German, and the English.

But these qualities, although marking distinctively these races, are not theirs exclusively; they belong to human nature at large.

National characteristics are neither absolute nor invariable differences. But just as the individuals of particular nations have a general resemblance to each other, so have all the nations themselves; and as the dividing line between Italy and Germany is a purely arbitrary division, and for many miles on each side of it the inhabitants are homogeneous; as Suabia and Saxony and Hanover are imperceptibly separated from each other, yet all make one Germany together; so national characteristics continually blend and mingle, and gradually lead us to the reflection that, as the substance of the globe upon which we live and the substance of human bodies are, at last, the same, so the races are but one race, human nature is everywhere endowed with the same rights and duties, and thus Christianity, or the doctrine and practice of universal brotherhood, becomes simply the ethical statement of a scientific fact.

In whatever country and whatever case a man may chance to be born, he is born a citizen of the world, and bound by the universal rule of right or law of God. God writes that law upon the man's perceptions, and we call it conscience, or God in him. Proper manhood is the fruit of obedience to that law. Countries and families are but nurseries and influences. A man is a father, a brother, a son, a German, a Roman, an American; but beneath all these relations he is a man. The end of his human destiny is surely not to be the best German or the best Roman or the best father, but the best man he can be.

History shows us that this association of men in various relations is made subservient to the gradual ad-

vance and advantage of the whole human race, and that all nations work together towards one great result.

So to the philosophic eye the race is but a vast caravan, forever moving, but seeming often to encamp for centuries; to halt at some green oasis of ease, where the siren Luxury lures away Heroism, as soft Capua enervated the hosts of Hannibal. But still the march proceeds, slowly, slowly, over mountains, through valleys, along plains; marking its course with monumental splendors — cities, arts, literatures, histories — with wars, plagues, murders, private selfishness, and public crime; advancing still, decorated with all the pomp of nature, counselled by the seasons, lit by the constellations, cheered by the future, warned by the past. In that vast march the van forgets the rear, the individual is lost—and yet the multitude is but many individuals; —he faints and falls and dies; his heart wavers, his hope expires; man is forgotten, but still mankind moves on, still worlds revolve, and the will of God is done in earth and in heaven.

Viewing its many tragic steps, we must not wonder that men have gravely asked if the race were not utterly lost. Nature mocks us, they say. A rose is perfect. No imagination of a rose could change it; but man, the darling of creation, for whom roses blow and stars shine and the spheres sing—man, the tenant of time and heir of eternity, lies, cheats, steals; repeats to-day the crime, and mumbles to-morrow the excuse of yesterday; satisfied to be no meaner than other men, to live without friction, and die without faith.

Human history seems but a series of wars and in-

trigues. Our best literature, Shakespeare, Dante, Goethe, Bacon, Fénelon, is a sigh, a sermon, a satire, or a dream; and art instinctively seeks the ideal or possible, instead of the real or actual, humanity. The survey breeds a hopeless scepticism or a more disastrous sophistry. Seeing the ignorance, the war, the pestilence, the slavery, men ask, "Is it not inevitable? Does not God permit it all? If we do the wrong will he not work it to the right, and, in any event, if the crime is to be done must not somebody be the criminal?"

And so we have Malthusian theories, and prayers to the God of battles, and gildings and gloryings of piracy and robbery and slavery. But over all thunders still the curse, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe to him by whom the offence cometh!"

Patriotism, or the peculiar relation of an individual to his country, is like the family instinct. In the child it is a blind devotion; in the man an intelligent love. The patriot perceives the claim made upon his country by the circumstances and time of her growth and power, and how God is to be served by using those opportunities of helping mankind. Therefore his country's honor is dear to him as his own, and he would as soon lie and steal himself as assist or excuse his country in a crime.

Right and Wrong, Justice and Crime, exist independently of our country. A public wrong is not a private right for any citizen. The citizen is a man bound to know and to do the right, and the nation is but an aggregation of citizens. If a man shout, "My country, by whatever means extended and bounded; my coun-

try, right or wrong," he merely utters words such as those might be of the thief who steals in the street, or of the trader who swears falsely at the Custom-house, both of them chuckling, "My fortune, however acquired."

Thus, gentlemen, we see that a man's country is not a certain area of land, of mountains, rivers, and woods, but it is a principle: and patriotism is loyalty to that principle. In poetic minds and in popular enthusiasm this feeling becomes closely associated with the soil and the symbols of the country. But the secret sanctification of the soil and the symbol is the idea which they represent, and this idea the patriot worships through the name and the symbol, as a lover kisses with rapture the glove of his mistress and wears a lock of her hair upon his heart.

So, with passionate heroism, of which tradition is never weary of tenderly telling, Arnold von Winkelried gathers into his bosom the sheaf of foreign spears, that his death may give life to his country; so Nathan Hale, disdaining no service that his country demands, perishes untimely, with the sense of duty done and of God as his friend. So, through all history from the beginning, a noble army of martyrs has fought fiercely and fallen bravely for that unseen mistress, their country. So through all history to the end, as long as men believe in God, that army must still march and fight and fall; recruited only from the flower of mankind, cheered only by their own hope for humanity, strong only in their confidence in their cause.

Yet through the ages of the combat the mistress, be-

loved as with human affection, of whom poets sing, for whom heroes die, is still unseen and her voice unheard. But in some happy hour of bivouac the musing soldier hears the hum of cities and inland mills, sees golden harvests waving out of sight, sees men and women walking and working, parents and children of freemen, and bending over all the benediction of the summer sky; and the musing soldier of that great army in the harvest and the murmur knows that he sees and hears, as they can only be seen and heard, the face and the voice of the mistress he loves and worships.

If such is Patriotism in general, what is it in particular? How can you, as educated young Americans, best serve the great cause of human development to which all nationalities are subservient?

In the life of Columbus we read that, after being many weeks at sea, the great navigator was at open defiance with his crew; but one day, after the vesper hymn to the Virgin had been sung, Columbus pointed out to his crew the goodness of God in wafting them over a tranquil ocean and holding out to them promise of land. "As the evening darkened," says the charming chronicler, who, himself the patriarch of American literature, has written with touching fidelity the lives of the two most famous men associated with the history of America—Columbus, who discovered the theatre of the historical experiment, and Washington, who secured its honest trial, and has thereby linked to those great names another which I do not need to mention, for your hearts go before my lips to name Washington Irving—"as the evening darkened, Columbus took his station on the top

of the castle or cabin, on the high poop of his vessel, urging his eye along the dusky horizon, and maintaining an intense and unremitting watch. About ten o'clock he thought he beheld a light glimmering at a great distance. Fearing his eager hopes might deceive him, he called to Pedro Gutierez, gentleman of the king's bedchamber, and inquired whether he saw such a light. The latter replied in the affirmative. Doubtful whether it might not yet be some delusion of the fancy, Columbus called Rodrigo Sanchez, of Segovia, and made the same inquiry. By the time the latter had ascended the round-house the light had disappeared. They saw it once or twice afterwards, in sudden and passing gleams, as if it were a torch in the bark of a fisherman rising and sinking in the waves, or in the hand of some person on shore, borne up and down as he walked from house to house. So transient and uncertain were these gleams that few attached any importance to them. Columbus, however, considered them as certain signs of land, and, moreover, that the land was inhabited."

So, out of dancing waves, trembling and uncertain, rose the natal star of our continent; so, as in the old Greek fable of Venus love and beauty arose from purity, emerged a new world into history; so, as that world was destined to light the wandering nations to liberty, it first appeared as a harbinger of hope to weary mariners — a light upon the shore, a ray in the darkness. May I not say without irreverence that, since the Shepherds followed the heavenly beacon to the manger where the Infant lay, no star so sacred has risen in the sky as the glimmering light that showed Columbus he

had reached the continent in which the future of the world reposed.

The collected civilization of the world before the fifteenth century was but a various development of the principle of absolutism in human affairs. The State was the corollary of the Church. The new continent seems to have been reserved by Providence in virgin seclusion for the development of the other great principle of freedom, or human liberty. Mankind had begun to outgrow the idea of political and religious slavery, and a revolution was preparing as deep as the human soul and as dear as its interests.

A century before the discovery of America Wickliffe had declared that a bad man could not be a good spiritual guide merely because he was a priest; and, that bad men might not be the sole interpreters of the good book, he translated the Bible into the language of the common people; and so seemingly ripe were the people that it was said you could not meet two men talking in the street but one was a Wickliffite. Half a century after Wickliffe came the invention of printing which was to make his translation accessible to the people; and nearly half a century later Columbus discovered America, and Martin Luther was nine years old.

But the new continent was not to become at once the theatre of the new principle. On the contrary, it is curious to observe that Columbus sailed only for a shorter way to the Indies, and hoped, perhaps, that the light he saw flickering across the waves might prove, at morning, to have shone from some stately palace of Cathay. In the spirit of his voyage came those who

followed him. The enterprise had been aimed at India or El Dorado for the sake of gold, and the Spaniards who benefited by the discovery sought only the same object.

It is curious, also, that the part of the continent first touched was the most tropical and luxuriant, requiring the least labor to cultivate, and hiding the most precious metals. Allured by the charm of climate and the promise of wealth, swarms of adventurers crossed the sea. The lust of gold never begot so sickening a spectacle as that of the American Indies in those earlier days. Outraging all divine and human laws, the life of those adventurers was an orgy, a fierce debauch.

The Bishop Las Casas, shocked by the crimes against the inoffensive Indians, and stupefied with the sophistry of a Church which has always had that half of the apostolic character which consists in the wisdom of the serpent, advised the enslaving of negroes, who were a stronger race, and might by compulsory slavery be won to the service of a God who is love and liberty. This was the culmination of the crimes against humanity which marked the early settlements in America. And it is dreadful to remember that the curse which has blighted millions of our fellow-men upon this continent, and which at this moment seems to be the chief serious obstacle to the triumph of the process for which the continent was reserved, can be traced back to the suggestion of one man, and he a Christian bishop.

But let us never forget, in extenuation of this enormous crime, that Las Casas was a Spanish Roman Catholic, living more than three centuries ago, in the

midst of the horrors of the early West Indian struggle for gold; and that he lived to deplore bitterly the course he had advised, having learned, as three centuries have continued to learn, that to do a great and evident wrong for the sake of a possible good is only to make sure of committing the sin and to leave the good worse than undone. And I am sure no candid young mind can hear without incredulity and shame that the repented error of Las Casas three hundred years ago is the last desperate defence of a system in the land where he planted it which the holy indignation of humanity is slowly, but surely, withering. If we grant with reverence that God brings good out of evil, shall we therefore, with Jesuitical sophistry, consent to do the evil?

It seemed, certainly, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, as if the discovery of the new continent had only made the world richer to make it worse. The new settlements merely repeated in more hideous forms the vices of the old European civilization. But the kind climate, the quick soil, and the rare metals, by attracting adventurers, had done their work. The lost Atlantis had been found again. Sebastian Cabot, Cabral, Cortereal, Verrazzani, Cartier, in many latitudes, under every auspice, had touched the remote and fabulous shores. Among the sunset clouds a new continent lay fallow for the future—waiting to be possessed and inhabited by any people who had sufficient cause and heart and hope enough to subdue it.

The movement for whose ultimate purposes the scene was thus preparing still went on in Europe.

Wickliffe had translated the Bible into English. Luther translated the New Testament into German, and while Charles V. issued a rescript against "the fool," "the blasphemer," "the fiend in human form," Martin Luther defied popes, emperors, and as many devils as there were tiles upon the house-tops, and with the pope's bull of excommunication he kindled the immortal fire that was to blaze brighter as it crossed the sea; and the little wavering flame of human liberty which he kindled in Wurtemberg was to burst like day on the new land, and blaze there, ever higher and higher, until it became the light of the world.

The reckless cavaliers of Spain landed in the tropics for a life of luxury, and they made no permanent impression upon this continent except of sorrow and misery. The controlling settlement of the country was delayed — until the sad, severe children of Luther's spirit, for whom in the divine order this land was kept, came praying across a wintry sea and landed on its gloomiest shore.

From the love of liberty, and from what is rarer, the ability of organizing liberty in institutions, sprang the America of which we are so fondly proud. Our popular or democratic idea has this profound difference from the same thought as it appeared in Greece or the republics of the Middle Ages, that it is associated with the religious instinct; so that our political has always rested upon our religious liberty. American civilization, in its idea, is, historically, the political aspect of the Reformation. America is a permanent protest against the principle of absolutism; it opposes freedom to feu-

dalism, liberty to slavery. Democracy is the declaration of a brotherhood of rights, and, therefore, with a sublime propriety, forecasting its destined liberty, the first articulate words of America were, "All men are born free and equal"—the echo in the mouths of legislators and the hearts of a people of the song the Syrian shepherds heard from celestial singers, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

Now, as I conceive it, gentlemen, patriotism in an American is simply fidelity to the American idea. Our government was established confessedly in obedience to this sentiment of human liberty. And your duty as patriots is to understand clearly that by all its antecedents your country is consecrated to the cause of freedom; that it was discovered when the great principle of human liberty was about to be organized in institutions; that it was settled by men who were exiled by reason of their loyalty to that principle; that it separated politically from its mother country because that principle had been assailed; that it began its peculiar existence by formally declaring its faith in human freedom and equality; and, therefore, that whatever in its government or policy tends to limit or destroy that freedom and equality is anti-American and unpatriotic, because America and liberty are inseparable ideas.

Doubtless in every civilized and intelligent society there is no need of saying that the public laws must be obeyed. But the rule is subject to a very grave exception. The name of law has always been the glove muffled in which the hand of Tyranny has taken Liberty by the throat.

You have no right to sophisticate your minds. You are not to suppose that a law is, under all circumstances, to be obeyed: you would be poor children of seven years' armed disobedience to laws if you believed that. A civilized and intelligent society obeys the laws. When the law begins to grind, that community changes it if it makes its own laws, or protests if it does not. If protest is of no avail and the law still grinds, the community changes the law-makers at whatever cost of time and money and blood.

You have heard it a thousand times; it is a Fourth-of-July oration. But we must go one step further, to the issue upon which, so far as we can see, the whole future of the race depends. In the world upon which you are entering you will be told that, with us, all excuse for disobedience is removed because we can so easily and often change the laws; that if Charles I. had really summoned the whole people of England to a parliament, and had executed their will, Cromwell and Hampden would have had no reason; that if the American colonies had been fairly represented, Washington would have been a mere rebel.

But, gentlemen, amid the jargon of corrupt politics, and the shivering sophistries of timidity and indifference and ease which blow upon every generation of young hearts, as the suffocating scirocco blows over springing grain, remember steadily that laws are of two kinds—those which concern us as citizens, and those which affect us as men. We are born men, with certain indefeasible moral duties—whether our birth chance in China or New England—and we are born

citizens, with certain obligations to the law. If, therefore, the law of the land, enacted by a majority of the people, declare that you must pay a heavy tax, that a railroad may pierce your garden, that a duty may be levied upon the goods you import, however injurious to you the effect may be you can have no right to resist forcibly, because the consequences of forcible resistance would be universal confusion and injury, and because, if it be found to be a grievance by the majority, they will presently put it right, and meanwhile your pecuniary loss is your share of the compromise for the general security. These are laws that concern us only as citizens in our relations to the State. In themselves they have no moral character or importance.

But if the law of the land, enacted by the majority, declares that you must murder your child under two years of age, or prostitute your daughter, or deny a cup of water to the thirsty, or return to savage Indians an innocent captive flying for his life whom they had stolen from his country and enslaved for their own gain, under the name of civilizing him, you have no right to obey, because such laws nullify themselves, being repulsive to the holiest human instincts, and obedience would produce a more disastrous public demoralization than any possible revolution could breed. "To authorize an untruth by a toleration of State," said the Cobbler of Agawam, one of the stern old Puritans, two hundred and seventeen years ago, "is to build a sconce against the walls of heaven, to batter God out of his chair." Such laws God and man require of you to disobey, for upon a people who, under any pretence,

could yield to them there is no tyranny so terrible that it might not be imposed.

Will you obey, under the plea that it is law, and that you have no right to judge the law, but must try to alter it by and by? By and by? But God is God to-day! and to-day a child is born to you—he is under two years old; to-day the thirsty wretch falls parched and panting at your feet; to-day the captive from those Indians red as murder crouches on your hearth-stone; and the law is knocking at your door—"Give me that child, give me that thirsty wretch, give me that frightened fugitive; I am the law!" Yes, and God is knocking at your heart, "Whosoever doeth it unto the least of these my brethren, doeth it unto me"!

If we believe that our country embodies any principle, that it is peopled for another purpose than the early Spaniards peopled it, and that as moral agents and self-respecting men we have something to do in America besides turning the air and water and earth into wealth, we shall need to cling to no principle so strongly as this, that no possible law can bind us to do a moral wrong. All other inconveniences and disadvantages we may suffer for the sake of law, seeing how soon the injury may be repaired, but there is no reparation of moral injury. What excuse is it for my lying and thieving and murdering, for my trampling upon conscience, which is God in me, that the law ordered it?

I should be sorry to seem unmindful of the scope of what I say. I do not think I am. I think, and you think with me, that if there were ever a doubt of the happy duration of this government, it is in the days

that are passing, and because there is now a deadly debate in our minds whether men may not do wrong for the sake of some apparent advantage.

Will you ask where we should be if every citizen is to decide for himself whether he is to obey the law? On the other hand, I ask you where we shall be if he is not? If he consent to act against his moral judgment for a year, for two years, for six months, for a week, do you not see that his entire moral nature is corrupted; that such a man upon the very same ground would deny his father, would sell his sister, if the law required; and that to believe the interests of mankind committed to a nation of such men is to accuse not only the goodness but the wisdom of God?

Besides, whenever in a country like ours a law which violates the moral sense chances to exist, it is the will of the majority, and they will punish the disobedient. To that punishment the offender will willingly submit, and thereby show homage to the principles of law. But when good men are sent to jail for refusing to do wrong, if there be any public conscience there will soon be a change. James II. sent the bishops to the Tower; but to put them in the Tower was not to put them in the wrong, and after a little while the people of England drove James II. across the sea.

Nor need you fear that men will plead their conscience falsely to avoid obedience to the law. Because the penalty is always proportioned and always exacted, and if a man says, to escape payment of a tax, that his moral sense will not allow him to pay, his tax will be doubled or trebled in the shape of penalty.

Remember that the greatness of our country is not in the greatness of its achievement, but in its promise—a promise that cannot be fulfilled without that sovereign moral sense, without a sensitive national conscience. If it were a question of the mere daily pleasure of living, the gratification of taste, opportunity of access to the great intellectual and æsthetic results of human genius and whatever embellishes human life, no man could hesitate a moment between the fulness of foreign lands in these respects and the conspicuous poverty of our own. What have we done? We have subdued and settled a vast domain. We have made every inland river turn a mill, and wherever on the dim rim of the globe there is a harbor, we have lighted it with an American sail. We have bound the Atlantic to the Mississippi, so that we drift from the sea to the prairies upon a cloud of vapor; and we are stretching one hand across the continent to fulfil the hope of Columbus in a shorter way to Cathay, and with the other we are groping under the sea to clasp there the hand of the old continent, that so the throbbing of the ocean may not toss us farther apart, but be as the beating of one common pulse of the world.

Yet these are results common to all national enterprise, and different with us only in degree, not in kind. These are but the tools with which to shape a destiny. Commercial prosperity is only a curse if it be not subservient to moral and intellectual progress, and our prosperity will conquer us if we do not conquer our prosperity.

Our commercial success tends to make us all cowards;

but we have got to make up our minds in this country whether we believe in the goodness and power of God as sincerely as we undoubtedly do in the dexterity of the Devil, that we may shape our national life accordingly and not be praying now to good God, now to good Devil, and wondering which is going to carry us off after all.

The whole of Patriotism for us seems to consist at the present moment in the maintenance of this public moral tone. No voice of self-glorification, no complacent congratulation that we are the greatest, wisest, and best of nations, will help our greatness or our goodness in the smallest degree. History and mankind do not take men or nations at their own valuation, and a man no longer secures instant respect and sympathy by announcing himself an American. Are we satisfied that America should have no other excuse for independent national existence than a superior facility of money-making? Shall it have no national justification to the intellect and the heart? Does the production of twelve hundred million pounds of cotton fulfil the destiny of this continent in the order of providence? Why, if we are unfaithful as a nation, though our population were to double in a year, and the roar and rush of our vast machinery were to silence the music of the spheres, and our wealth were enough to buy all the world, our population could not bully history, nor all our riches bribe the eternal Justice not to write upon us, as with fiery finger the autumn is beginning even now to write upon the woods and fields, "Ichabod! Ichabod! the glory is departed!"

But I am not here to counsel you to despair and head-shakings. I am here to say that this country which you are to inherit, and for which you are to be responsible, needs only an enlightened patriotism to fulfil all its mission and justify the dreams of its youth. I do not believe that our young energy is capable of nothing more than money-making at any cost, at any wear and tear of the moral sense. I do not believe the continent, veiled and virgin through all the debaucheries of early history, was unveiled only to be wedded to the same spirit grown rank and old. I do not believe that the purpose of God in the progress of the race to self-respecting and consistent liberty and law is to be thwarted by moral cowardice. But I believe, rather, that there is a moral sentiment in the country which will make the glooms of its morning the glory of its prime, and which honors the name American so much that it would willingly die rather than see it desecrated.

Surrounded by unequalled opportunities, let us use them as God inspires. Be faithful, be brave, be bold; neither deluded by the hope of easy success nor disheartened by the long delay. We shall die, and our children's children, and yet the end not be. But be cheered by the great aim and by the great spirit in which you serve it. Live to justify your own hope and the vision of all noble minds.

III

THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION

A LECTURE DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y., OCTOBER 18, 1859.

The advance of the proslavery party was steady from the beginning of Mr. Buchanan's administration, and its claims were never more aggressively asserted than during the year 1859.

The repeal of all laws, State or Federal, prohibiting the African slave-trade was proposed, and the proposal had wide support in the Southern States. Without waiting for their repeal the laws were already violated by slave-traders, and cargoes of negroes direct from Africa were secretly landed at various points on the Southern coast, and the negroes were sold.

The Fugitive-slave Law was enforced vigorously in Ohio and other States.

The Federal government was practically in the hands of the advocates of slavery, and the South was united in its determination to maintain and extend the slave-power.

The North was divided in sentiment and uncertain in policy. Its conscience was enfeebled and debauched.

In October the whole country was startled by John Brown's raid. Passion ruled the hour at the South, and the character of John Brown's attempt to raise a revolt among the slaves was such that, while there was throughout the North a strong and just sympathy for the man himself, there was little approval of his methods and design.

It was on the very day on which John Brown was taken prisoner that Mr. Curtis delivered the following address at Plymouth Church in Brooklyn.

On the 11th of December he repeated it at the Music Hall in Boston. John Brown had been hanged on the 2d of the month.

The feelings of men everywhere were excited, their temper was irritable; the slavery question had taken on a new aspect, the debate was carried on in a sharper tone.

Mr. Curtis was to repeat this address in Philadelphia on the 15th of December. The Twenty-fourth Annual Fair of the Philadelphia Female Antislavery Society opened on Monday the 12th. The sympathies of a large part of the citizens were with

the South. The fair was regarded by them as an offence. Means were found by which on the morning of the 15th a writ of ejectment from the hall in which the fair was held was served upon its managers. On the same morning a call signed "Many Citizens" appeared in one of the principal newspapers, the *Pennsylvanian*, for a rally of "Union men" that evening in front of National Hall, where Mr. Curtis was to deliver his address. "All who are determined," said the call, "that no more hireling incendiaries shall be permitted to make their inflammatory addresses in our loyal city are invited to attend."

The mayor, Mr. Henry, though what was known as a "Union man," was a man of character and energy, and he took the necessary steps to maintain the right of free speech and to protect the city from mob violence.

Mr. Curtis, attended by a body-guard of faithful friends, appeared at the hall at the time appointed. The hall was filled by a large audience, of which the majority were with the speaker; but outside was a great mob ready for violence, but held in check by a large body of police. Mr. Curtis delivered his address in the midst of interruption. A few paving-stones and a bottle of vitriol were thrown through the windows, but no serious injury was inflicted.

This was one of the last instances in which the attempt was made to suppress free speech in the free States in the interest of slavery. But two or three years were yet to pass before such attempts were at an end.

In December, 1860, Mr. Curtis was engaged to give a non-political lecture before the People's Literary Institute in Philadelphia. But a riot was anticipated in case he should appear. The mayor advised the chairman of the Literary Institute that Mr. Curtis's appearance would be "extremely unwise," and that if he possessed the lawful power he would not allow it. The owner of the hall engaged for the lecture refused to allow the hall to be used for the purpose—and Philadelphia lost the distinction she had gained in the preceding year.

"It seems that I am such a dangerous fellow," wrote Mr. Curtis a few weeks afterwards, in a letter to a friend, "that no hall owner in Philadelphia will risk the result of my explosive words, and not a place can be had for my fanatical and incendiary criticism of Thackeray."

THE PRESENT ASPECT OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION

THERE are certain great sentiments which simultaneously possess many minds and make what we call the spirit of the age. That spirit at the close of the last century was peculiarly humane. From the great Spanish Cardinal Ximenes, who refused the proposal of the Bishop Las Casas to enslave the Indians; from Milton, who sang,

> "But man over man
> He made not Lord; such title to himself
> Reserving, human left from human free";

from John Selden, who said, "Before all, Liberty"; from Algernon Sidney, who died for it; from Morgan Godwyn, a clergyman of the Established Church, and Richard Baxter, the Dissenter, with his great contemporary, George Fox, whose protest has been faithfully maintained by the Quakers; from Southern, Montesquieu, Hutcheson, Savage, Shenstone, Sterne, Warburton, Voltaire, Rousseau, down to Cowper and Clarkson in 1783 —by the mouths of all these and innumerable others Religion, Scepticism, Literature, and Wit had persist-

ently protested against the sin of slavery. As early as 1705 Lord Holt had declared there was no such thing as a slave by the law of England. At the close of the century, four years before our Declaration, Lord Mansfield, though yearning to please the planters, was yet compelled to utter the reluctant "Amen" to the words of his predecessor. Shall we believe Lord Mansfield, who lived in the time and spoke for it, when he declared that wherever English law extended—and it extended to these colonies — there was no man whatsoever so poor and outcast but had rights sacred as the king's; or shall we believe a judge eighty-four years afterwards, who says that at that time Africans were regarded as people "who had no rights which the white man was bound to respect"? I am not a lawyer, but, for the sake of the liberty of my countrymen, I trust the *law* of the Supreme Court of the United States is better than its knowledge of history.

The principle of our Revolution, as defined by its leaders with sublime simplicity, was, that as Liberty is a natural right of man, every man has consequent equal rights in society, subject indeed to limitation, but not to annihilation.

"But," cries Mr. Douglas, in his Memphis speech last November—I quote his words—"our fathers were not talking of negroes, nor thinking of them . . . they were speaking of white men, men of European birth, and they said they were equal, that is, equal to their brethren across the water." Well, it would have been perfectly easy to say, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all white men of the European race upon

this continent are created equal — to their brethren across the water; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; but that yellow, black, brown, and red men have no such rights." It would have been very easy to say this. Our fathers did not say it, because they did not mean it. They were men who meant what they said, and who said what they meant, and meaning all men, they said all men. They were patriots asserting a principle and ready to die for it, not politicians pettifogging for the Presidency.

Mr. Douglas incessantly remembers to inform us in every speech he has made for a year past that, when the Constitution was formed, all the thirteen States but one recognized slavery by law; but he incessantly forgets to add that Pennsylvania in 1780 passed an act for the gradual abolition of slavery which freed everybody born in the State after its passage; that one day later Massachusetts decided that her Bill of Rights abolished slavery forever; that in 1784 Connecticut followed Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island at about the same time; that in 1792, soon after the Constitution was formed, New Hampshire, under her Bill of Rights, Vermont, by express assertion in her Constitution, New York in March, 1799, and New Jersey in 1804, gradually abolished slavery.

That is to say, within less than twenty years after the Constitution was formed, and in obedience to that general opinion of the time which condemned slavery as a sin in morals and a blunder in economy, eight of the States had abolished it by law — four of them having already done so when the instrument was framed; and

Mr. Douglas might as justly quote the fact that there were slaves in New York up to 1827 as proof that the public opinion of the State sanctioned slavery, as to try to make an argument of the fact that there were slave laws upon the statute-books of the original States. He forgets that there was not in all the colonial legislation of America one single law which recognized the rightfulness of slavery in the abstract; that in 1774 Virginia stigmatized the slave-trade as "wicked, cruel, and unnatural"; that in the same year Congress protested against it "under the sacred ties of virtue, honor, and love of country"; that in 1775 the same Congress denied that God intended one man to own another as a slave; that the new Discipline of the Methodist Church, in 1784, and the Pastoral Letter of the Presbyterian Church, in 1788, denounced slavery; that abolition societies existed in slave States, and that it was hardly the interest even of the cotton-growing States, where it took a slave a day to clean a pound of cotton, to uphold the system. Mr. Douglas incessantly forgets to tell us that Jefferson, in his address to the Virginia Legislature of 1774, says that "the abolition of domestic slavery is the greatest object of desire in these colonies, where it was unhappily introduced in their infant state"; and while he constantly remembers to remind us that the Jeffersonian prohibition of slavery in the territories was lost in 1784, he forgets to add that it was lost, not by a majority of votes—for there were sixteen in its favor to seven against it—but because the sixteen votes did not represent two thirds of the States; and he also incessantly forgets to tell us that this Jefferso-

nian prohibition was restored by the Congress of 1785, and erected into the famous Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which was re-enacted by the first Congress of the United States and approved by the first President.

I will not weary you with the proof of this. James Madison, who knew perhaps as well as any one what the makers of the Constitution meant, said, "We intend this Constitution to be the great charter of Human Liberty to the unborn millions who shall enjoy its protection, and who should never see that such an institution as slavery was ever known in our midst." And the Congress of 1787, in resigning its functions, echoed the meaning of his words in saying, "Let it never be forgotten that the cause of the United States is the cause of human nature"—not of white men nor black men nor red men nor brown men—but of man, of mankind.

Our fathers, therefore, were fully alive to the scope of their words and their work; and thus, as I believe, the Constitution of the United States, in its essential spirit and intention, recognizes the essential manhood of Dred Scott as absolutely as it does that of the President, of the Chief Justice, or of any Senator of the United States.

I think I have not unfairly stated the spirit of the age, the sentiments of the fathers, and the original doctrine of this government upon the question of slavery. The system was recognized by law, but it was considered an evil which Time was surely removing.

And, as if to put this question at rest forever, to show that the framers of this government did *not* look

forward to a continuance of slavery, Mr. Stephens of Georgia, the most sagacious of the living slavery leaders, says, in June of this year: "The leading public men of the South, in our early history, were almost all against it. Jefferson was against it. This I freely admit, when the authority of their names is cited. It was a question which they did not, and perhaps could not, thoroughly understand at that time."

In like manner the Rev. Dr. William A. Smith, President of the Randolph-Macon College in Virginia, in his work upon the "Philosophy and Practice of Slavery," deliberately repudiates Mr. Jefferson's view of slavery as a "grossly offensive error," and attributes the anti-slavery movement to him—which is as wise as to attribute the motion of the earth to Galileo.

Judge Wayne, in his late charge at Savannah upon the law against the slave-trade, confirms Mr. Stephens's statement. And, as if to establish it by the most unexpected testimony, Mr. Edward Everett, in his late discourse upon Daniel Webster, said, "In common with all, or nearly all, the statesmen of the last generation, he believed that free labor would ultimately prevail throughout the continent."

If there be any fact in our history beyond dispute it is that Roger Sherman expressed the universal sentiment of our fathers when he said, "The abolition of slavery seemed to be going on in the United States, and the good sense of the several States would probably by degrees complete it." In that spirit the compromises of the Constitution were made. Had not slavery at that time deprecated itself as an evil, the

Constitution could not have been formed. Could the future have been foreseen, it would not have been formed. But, reasoning from the light they had, it was fair to believe as they believed, that, when the slave-trade was prohibited, the system would wither away under the double curse of Morality and Law.

Now, so far as we may ascribe any great historic result to a single cause, it is the cotton-gin which has thwarted the Constitution and defeated the expectation of our fathers. The cotton-gin—which in seven years saw a crop twenty times as large as before; the cotton-gin, which enabled a man to pick a thousand pounds of cotton in a day instead of one pound—has seemed also to pick the moral perceptions out of the minds of a great many sober and kindly people; to pick all the intention, the spirit, the humanity, the meaning, the very soul, out of the Constitution of the United States, making it not the charter of equal freedom to all who are subject to it, but a mere commercial band by which a part of the population are compelled, directly or indirectly, to hold another part in slavery.

From the invention of the cotton-gin slavery became a progressive system—not passively tolerated as in process of extinction, but actively striving for development and extension. It became a conscious political power. It made no offensive professions. It still deprecated itself as an evil, *so* difficult to deal with, and, with an adroit allusion to Ham and Onesimus, it smoothed the ecclesiastical conscience of the country and only asked to be let alone. And it was let alone. The War of 1812, and the consequent commercial confusion and re-

newed devotion to trade, held the country torpid upon the subject. If anybody looked at slavery inquisitively, it folded its hands demurely upon its breast and said, "I am such a dreadful thing! How unfortunate that I should exist! What *can* be done with me? Just please to let me alone, that is all I want. A leper, you see; a miserable leper!"

And so it went until the alarm was struck in the famous Missouri debate. Then wise men remembered what Washington had said, "Resist with care the spirit of innovation upon the *principles* of the Constitution." They saw that the letting alone was all on one side, that the unfortunate anomaly was deeply scheming to become the rule, and they roused the country. The old American love of liberty flamed out again. Meetings were everywhere held. The lips of young orators burned with the eloquence of freedom. The spirit of John Knox and of Hugh Peters thundered and lightened in the pulpits, and men were not called political preachers because they preached that we are all equal children of God. The legislatures of the free States instructed their representatives to stand fast for liberty. Daniel Webster, speaking for the merchants of Boston, said that it was a question essentially involving the perpetuity of the blessings of liberty for which the Constitution itself was formed. Daniel Webster, speaking for humanity at Plymouth, described the future of the slave as "a widespread prospect of suffering, anguish, and death." The land was loud with the debate, and Rufus King stated its substance in saying that it was a question of slave or free policy in the national gov-

ernment. Slavery hissed disunion; liberty smiled disdain. The moment of final trial came. Pinckney exulted. John Quincy Adams shook his head. Slavery triumphed and, with Southern chivalry, politely called victory compromise.

The advantage it had gained it has steadily maintained. "This is our matter, you know," it said. "Just please let us alone." It was let alone. Texas was ceded for Florida, completing the sea-line of slavery; and when slavery was ready Texas was taken back again, as when, afterwards, slavery had secured *its* share of the bargain, the Missouri Compromise was broken. In due order came the Mexican war and its consequences, the Fugitive-slave Bill and the loud chatter about saving the Union, so incessant that every thoughtful man asked himself, Is the casket more than the gem—the body than the soul—the Union than liberty? Then came the bloody tragedy of Kansas, with its justification by the President of the United States and by the Chief Justice; and I think no one will deny that Mr. Stephens is correct in calmly congratulating himself that slavery has carried all the important objects for which it has striven.

For what do we now see in the country? We see a man who, as Senator of the United States, voted to tamper with the public mails for the benefit of slavery, sitting in the President's chair. Two days after he is seated we see a judge rising in the place of John Jay—who said, "Slaves, though held by the laws of men, are free by the laws of God"—to declare that a seventh of the population not only have no original rights as men,

but no legal rights as citizens. We see every great office of State held by ministers of slavery; our foreign ambassadors not the representatives of our distinctive principle, but the eager advocates of the bitter anomaly in our system, so that the world sneers as it listens and laughs at liberty. We see the majority of every important committee of each house of Congress carefully devoted to slavery. We see throughout the vast ramification of the Federal system every little postmaster in every little town professing loyalty to slavery or sadly holding his tongue as the price of his salary, which is taxed to propagate the faith. We see every small Custom-House officer expected to carry primary meetings in his pocket and to insult at Fourth-of-July dinners men who quote the Declaration of Independence. We see the slave-trade in fact, though not yet in law, reopened—the slave-law of Virginia contesting the freedom of the soil of New York. We see slave-holders in South Carolina and Louisiana enacting laws to imprison and sell the free citizens of other States. Yes, and on the way to these results, at once symptoms and causes, we have seen the public mails robbed—the right of petition denied—the appeal to the public conscience made by the abolitionists in 1833 and onward derided and denounced, and their very name become a byword and a hissing. We have seen free speech in public and in private suppressed, and a Senator of the United States struck down in his place for defending liberty. We have heard Mr. Edward Everett, succeeding brave John Hancock and grand old Samuel Adams as governor of the freest State in history, say in his inaugural address

in 1836 that all discussion of the subject which tends to excite insurrection among the slaves (as if all discussion of it would not be so construed) "has been held by highly respectable legal authorities an offence against the peace of the commonwealth, which may be prosecuted as a misdemeanor at common law." We have heard Daniel Webster, who had once declared that the future of the slave was "a widespread prospect of suffering, anguish, and death," now declaring it to be "an affair of high morals" to drive back into that doom any innocent victim appealing to God and man, and flying for life and liberty. We have heard clergymen in their pulpits preaching implicit obedience to the powers that be, whether they are of God or the Devil—insisting that God's tribute should be paid to Cæsar, and, by sneering at the scruples of the private conscience, denouncing every mother of Judea who saved her child from the sword of Herod's soldiers. We have heard popular orators declaiming to audiences to whose fathers James Otis and Samuel Adams spoke, and whose fathers' cheeks would have burned with shame and their hearts tingled with indignation to hear, that the Declaration of Independence was the passionate manifesto of a revolutionary war, and its doctrine of equal human rights a glittering generality. And finally, throwing off the mask altogether, but still whining to be let alone, we see this system, grown now from seven hundred thousand to four millions of slaves, declaring that it is in a peculiar sense a divine and Christian institution; that it is right in itself and a blessing, not a bane; that it is ineradicable in the soil; that it is directly

recognized and protected by the Constitution of the United States; that its rights under that Constitution are to be maintained at all hazards; and *how* they are maintained we may see in the slave States, by the absolute annihilation of free speech and by codes of law insulting to humanity and common-sense; and how they are to be maintained in the new States we have seen in the story of Kansas. It declares that, the Congress of the United States being a slave instrument and being also the supreme law of the land, the rights of the slave States are to be protected from injury by the suppression in the free States of what shall be decided by the United States Courts to be incendiary discussion; and at last it openly announces, by its representative leaders in Congress, that if a majority of the people of the United States shall elect a government holding what they allow to have been the principles of the founders of the government upon this question, they will hesitate at no steps to destroy the Union.

So vast has been the change in the claim and position of slavery! So entirely has it reversed the classic story, and the blind, begging Belisarius has become the imperial general! So proudly, in such long and dazzling and magnificent array, stands Xerxes at the fiery pass of war! And where is Leonidas? Where is liberty?

Still, slavery professes only to wish its rights. It only wants to be let alone. Of course; what else could it want? And what else is the secret of the present state of the country? Under the plea of being let alone—that it was a dreadful thing and only wanted to mind its own business—it has quietly possessed itself,

one after another, of all the outworks of the Constitution, and now seeks to intrench itself finally in the citadel.

It was no further from the compromises of 1850 to the repeal of the Missouri bill in 1854, than it was from the annexation of Texas in 1845 to the compromises. Slavery had no reason to fear that it could not take one more step, and one more, every few years. If freedom will bear a pinch, it argued, it will bear a blow. If a blow, a kick. If a kick, we'll throw it and throttle it. The burglar who has quietly mounted one stair does not see why he may not mount the next. There is a risk; that is all. The master of the house sleeps quietly on. The burglar mounts another stair. Still the sleeper sleeps. Another. There is no motion yet. He mounts another. No reason for alarm. Hist! the last stair creeks; the master awakes—springs to his feet—grasps his weapon—aims—fires. Do you think he will sleep again? I don't believe he will.

This attempt to usurp the government by subverting the Constitution of the United States was the policy of the greatest leader the system of slavery has ever had in this country—that pagan of our politics, Mr. Calhoun. While other statesmen merely saw, he foresaw. His mind, of large forecast and comprehensive grasp, perceived that the logic of history, of civilization, of our national idea, of the universal conscience, was against slavery. But he had seen the conscience of the country, roused for a moment in the Missouri debate, drop asleep again. And with the audacity of genius he resolved to stun the country into acquiescence by claiming that slavery was the fundamental law of the land.

In 1850 Mr. Calhoun said, "Let us be done with compromises. Let us go back and stand upon the Constitution."

Four years afterwards, the most Christian and most democratic statesman we have had in our history since Washington, Mr. Seward, accepted the challenge thrown out by Mr. Calhoun, solemnly saying, "The sands of compromise are sliding from beneath my feet, and they are taking hold once more of the rock of the Constitution."

The debate forced upon the mind of the country this question: Does the Constitution, made at the time we know, by the men we know, holding the views we know, for the distinct intention it declares, stultify itself by securing the destruction of its expressed purposes?

The slavery debate has been really a death-struggle from that moment. Mr. Clay thought not. Mr. Clay was a shrewd politician, but the difference between him and Calhoun was the difference between principle and expediency. Calhoun's sharp, incisive genius has engraved his name, narrow but deep, upon our annals. The fluent and facile talents of Clay in a bold, large hand wrote his name in honey upon many pages. But time is already licking it away. Henry Clay was our great compromiser. That was known, and that was the reason why Mr. Buchanan's story of a bargain with J. Q. Adams always clung to Mr. Clay. He had compromised political *policies* so long that he had forgotten there is such a thing as political principle, which is simply a name for the moral instincts applied to government. He did not see that when Mr. Calhoun said he should return to the Constitution he took the question

with him, and shifted the battle-ground from the low, poisonous marsh of compromise, where the soldiers never know whether they are standing on land or water, to the clear, hard height of principle. Mr. Clay had his omnibus at the door to roll us out of the mire. The Whig party was all right and ready to jump in. The Democratic party was all right. The great slavery question was going to be settled forever. The bushel-basket of national peace and plenty and prosperity was to be heaped up and run over. Mr. Pierce came all the way from the granite hills of New Hampshire, where people are supposed to tell the truth, to announce to a happy country that it was at peace—that its bushel-basket was never so overflowingly full before. And then what? Then the bottom fell out. Then the gentlemen in the national rope-walk at Washington found they had been busily twining a rope of sand to hold the country together. They had been trying to compromise the principles of human justice, not the percentage of a tariff; the instincts of human nature and consequently of all permanent government, and the conscience of the country saw it. Compromises are the sheet-anchor of the Union—are they? As the English said of the battle of Bunker Hill, that two such victories would ruin their army, so two such sheet-anchors as the Compromise of 1850 would drag the Union down out of sight forever.

Government is, unquestionably, a science of compromises, but only of policies and interests, not of essential rights; and if of them, then the sacrifice must fall equally on all.

Up to this time the argument of the abolitionists, who since 1833 had been storming the national conscience—for they knew the real citadel of a nation—with the assertion that slavery was an absolute wrong, had been met by the reply: "Yes, yes; we know all about that. Of course it's a great wrong. The South agrees to that. It's dreadful sorry about it—but it's got the nasty thing, and it says if we'll only let it alone it will settle itself. Slavery is one of those things that work out themselves. The more you talk the worse it is. Besides, it's their own affair; we've nothing to do with it. Let 'em alone! Let 'em alone!"

And the clergy said: "Certainly, you're quite right; the disease is awful. Therefore, the only way is to let it alone. Amen. A contribution will now be taken up to extend Gospel privileges to the Philippine Islands."

The abolitionists retorted by declaring that you might as well let fire alone, by telling the free States that they were bound to thrust back fugitives, and were, therefore, themselves the mere bloodhounds and slaves of slavery, which could only live by expansion, and only wanted to be let alone to become impregnable.

"Pooh! pooh! nonsense!" was the reply; "that's all very well in theory, but it doesn't work so. The returning of slaves amounts to nothing in fact. All that is obsolete. And why make all this row? Can't you hush? We've nothing to do with slavery, we tell you. We can't touch it; and if you persist in this agitation about a mere form and theory, why, you're a set of pestilent fanatics and traitors; and if you get your noisy heads broken, you get just what you deserve." And

they quoted in the faces of the abolitionists the words of Governor Edward Everett, who was not an authority with them, in that fatal inaugural address, "The patriotism of all classes of citizens must be invited to abstain from a discussion which, by exasperating the master, can have no other effect than to render more oppressive the condition of the slave." It was as if some kindly Pharisee had said to Christ, "Don't try to cast out that evil spirit; it may rend the body on departing." Was it not as if some timid citizen had said, "Don't say hard things of intemperance lest the dram-shops, to spite us, should give away the rum"?

And so the battle raged. The abolitionists dashed against slavery with passionate eloquence like a hail of hissing fire. They lashed its supporters with the scorpion whip of their invective. Ambition, reputation, fortune, ease, life itself they threw upon the consuming altar of their cause. Not since those earlier fanatics of freedom, Patrick Henry and James Otis, has the master chord of human nature, the love of liberty, been struck with such resounding power. It seemed in vain, so slowly their numbers increased, so totally were they outlawed from social and political and ecclesiastical recognition. The merchants of Boston mobbed an editor for virtually repeating the Declaration of Independence. The city of New York looked on and smiled while the present United States marshal insulted a woman as noble and womanly and humane as Florence Nightingale. In other free States men were flying for their lives; were mobbed, seized, imprisoned, maimed, murdered; but still as, in the bitter days of

Puritan persecution in Scotland, the undaunted voices of the Covenanters were heard singing the solemn songs of God that echoed and re-echoed from peak to peak of the barren mountains, until the great dumb wilderness was vocal with praise—so in little towns and great cities were heard the uncompromising voices of these men sternly intoning the majestic words of the Golden Rule and the Declaration of Independence, which echoed from solitary heart to heart until the whole land rang with the litany of liberty.

But still the great public opinion of the free States was unmoved. It cried angrily: "You're only making matters worse. It's very hard, but what can we do? It's none of our business. It's none of our business."

But when 1850 came, and theory was found to be fact, when the man who was angrily crying, "It's none of my business, what have I to do with slavery?" suddenly felt the quivering, panting fugitive clinging to his knees —a wretched, forlorn, outcast, hunted man, guilty of no crime but color, and begging the succor that no honest man would refuse to a cur cowering on his threshold— then, as he stood aghast and heard Slavery thundering at his door, "I am the law. Give me my prey! Give me my prey!" he felt God knocking at his heart, "Whoso doeth it unto the least of these my little ones, doeth it unto me."

Up to this time, as I believe, slavery had been *let alone*, as it claimed to be, in good faith. Up to this time it is clear enough in our history that there was no *general* perception of the terrible truth that slavery was a system aggressive in its very nature, and necessarily

destructive of Constitutional rights and liberties. Up to this time there had been a general blindness to the fact that, under the plea, which was allowed, that it was a local and State institution, slavery had acquired an absolute national supremacy, and if not checked would presently declare itself in national law as the national policy. I think that the eyes of the people were opened rather by the frank statements and legislative action in Congress of the slave party; by the speeches of Mr. Calhoun, filtered through lesser minds and mouths than his; at last by the events in Kansas forcing every man to consider whether, while we had let slavery alone, it had also let us alone; and forcing him to see that its hand was already upon the throat of freedom in this country. I think that by the *acts* of the slave party, not by the *words* of the technical abolitionists, the country was at last aroused. The moral wrong and the political despotism of the system were at last perceived, and a reconstruction of political parties was inevitable. For in human society, while the individual conscience is the steam or motive power, political methods are the engine and the wheels by which progress is effected and secured.

The country was divided between the Whig and Democratic organizations. The Democratic party then, as now, was in open alliance with slavery, in a conspiracy against the Constitution and the peace of the country. Of that there was no hope; and when the Whig party at Baltimore with fabulous fatuity dodged the question, the great Whig party, newly painted and repaired, with all its guns burnished, its drums beating and colors fly-

ing, went down in a moment clean out of sight, like the *Royal George* at Spithead, and of all that stately craft there remain but a few ancient mariners drifting half-drowned in the water, and sputtering with winking eyes that the ship had better try another voyage.

Out of the chaos that followed the so-called final settlement of the slavery question in 1850 arose the great political antislavery party, whose vital force is in the conscience of its supporters, whose central idea is the original American principle—the equality of human rights—and whose unswerving policy is the planting of the government ineradicably upon that principle.

It is a party of ideas and interests combined. It holds with Jefferson that God has no attribute which can take part with slavery. It looks anxiously with Washington for the means by which it can be abolished. It seeks with the framers of the Northwest Ordinance to exclude it from the territories, because it is at war with the essential principles of the government and with the expressed intention of the Constitution.

I confess I secretly suspect the Republicanism of an orator who is more anxious to show his hearers that he respects what he calls the rights of slavery than that he loves the rights of man. If God be just and the human instinct true, slavery has no *rights* at all. It has only a legalized toleration. Have I a right to catch a weaker man than I, and appropriate him, his industry, and his family, forever, against his will, to my service? Because if I have, any man stronger than I has the same right over me. But if I have not, what possible right is represented by the two thousand million dollars of property

in human beings in this country? It is the right of Captain Kidd on the sea, of Dick Turpin on the land. I certainly do not say that every slave-holder is a bad man, because I know the contrary. The complicity of many with the system is inherited, and often unwilling. But to rob a man of his liberty, to make him so far as possible a brute and a thing, is not less a crime against human nature because it is organized into a hereditary system of frightful proportions. A wrong does not become a right by being vested.

If the slave-power could now in good faith stand where the fathers stood, with the added lights of experience shining upon the question, asking sympathy and co-operation in a system of emancipation, pleading that it was unfair to ask them to make greater sacrifices than other men are willing to make, allowing that it was a common evil, the cost and trouble of whose removal should be cheerfully borne by all; or if the laws of any slave State looked towards the gradual relief of the difficulty, there is not an honest man in the North or the South whose heart would not tremble with joy as he contemplated the destiny of his country.

And as I understand the Republican party, while it steadily holds that slavery is in itself a wrong, it does not forget human conditions and the actual state of things; and, therefore, that the questions of planting slavery in fresh territory and of removing it where it is inwrought in a system of society are very different, as different as the prevention and the cure of disease. The question of the moment, then, is simply whether the most unrelenting and permanent despotism can be justified by the Constitution

of the United States. That is, whether the makers of the government meant that the democratic-republican principle should gradually, but surely, disappear from that government. There are, therefore, but two parties: one holding that a system of free society, the other that one of slave society, is the real intention of the government.

These parties are sectionally divided in situation, but they both aim to have their idea become the national policy. The party of slavery, indeed, is divided in its own camp, but only upon a minor question. The point of difference between Mr. Douglas and Mr. Buchanan is not whether all men under this government have rights, but simply in what way those who deprive them of those rights shall be most securely protected. Mr. Douglas argues that the slave party is the only national party; "because," he says, "so long as we live under a common Constitution, any political creed which cannot be proclaimed wherever that Constitution is the supreme law of the land must be ruinous and fatal."

He makes short work of it. For it is a matter of fact that the creed of equal human and consequent political rights *cannot* be proclaimed everywhere in the country; and therefore whoever, in the present juncture of our affairs, can proclaim his entire political creed as frankly in Charleston as in Boston, can do it only because he has stricken from the list our distinctive national principle, without which we are not Americans at all—the natural equal rights of men. If Washington or Jefferson or Madison should utter upon his native soil to-day the opinions he entertained and expressed upon this ques-

tion, he would be denounced as a fanatical abolitionist. To declare the right of all men to liberty is sectional, because slavery is afraid of liberty and strikes the mouth that speaks the word. To preach slavery is not sectional —no: because freedom respects itself and believes in itself enough to give an enemy fair play. Thus Boston asked Senator Toombs to come and say what he could for slavery. I think Boston did a good thing, but I think Senator Toombs is not a wise man, for he went. He went all the way from Georgia to show Massachusetts how slavery looks, and to let it learn what it has to say. When will Georgia ask Wendell Phillips or Charles Sumner to come down and show her how liberty looks and speaks?

If a man cannot stand up in Charleston or Savannah or Richmond and say that he believes the right of every man to the enjoyment of life, liberty, and happiness to be self-evident; if he be tarred and feathered for saying it, or ridden upon a rail, or ducked in a horse-pond, or driven out of his pulpit or professorial chair, or shot down in his office, or waited upon by a committee who cannot be answerable for the chivalric impatience of their fellow-citizens—Mr. Douglas says it is a proof that his political principles are ruinous and fatal; which is simply the argument of a highway robber to his victim whom he knocks on the head, that if he didn't carry so much money in his pocket he wouldn't be robbed.

The party which is humorously called the Douglas *Democracy* no more recognizes the rights declared by the Declaration of Independence to be inalienable than does the party of the administration. Its leader repudiates the theory that the Constitution establishes slavery, but

he does not perceive in it, or in the circumstances of its adoption, or in the expressed sentiments and actions of its framers, any reason to suppose that it favors liberty more than slavery. He leaves all human rights at the mercy of a majority, and insists that the Constitution does the same.

Mr. Douglas in his speech at Memphis expressly says, "Whenever a territory has a climate, soil, and productions making it the interest of the inhabitants to encourage slave property, they will pass a slave-code and give it encouragement." He adds that they have a right to do it; and in his late speech at Columbus he declares that there must be no interference with any action of any State; insisting, according to the report, amid great laughter at the exquisite humor of the witticism, "If you go over to Virginia to steal her negroes, I trust she will catch you and put you in jail with other thieves."

Ah, Mr. Douglas! Mr. Douglas! if the little child just born to you were stolen from your arms and sold into slavery, and you went through fire and water to rescue her, would you say so airily, so jauntily, with such pleasant humor, that if you went to steal her you trust you would be caught and put in jail with other thieves? And yet not more do you love that child hanging at this moment upon her mother's bosom, than an old slave mother whom I know in the hospital across the river loved the child who forty years ago was torn from her breast and sold, and of whose fate for forty years that silent, sorrowing Rachel has not heard.

This negative doctrine of Mr. Douglas that there are no rights anterior to governments is the end of free

society. If the majority of a political community have a *right* to establish slavery if they think it for their interest, they have the same right to declare who shall be enslaved. The doctrine simply substitutes the despotic, irresponsible tyranny of many for that of one. If the majority shall choose that the interest of the State requires the slaughter of all infants born lame, of all persons more than seventy years of age, they have the right to slaughter them, according to what is called the Democratic doctrine. Do you think this a ludicrous and extreme case? But if the majority have a right to deprive a man of his liberty at their pleasure, they have an equal right to take his life. For life is no more a natural right than liberty. The individual citizen, according to Mr. Douglas, is not secure in his person, in his property, in his family, for a single moment from the whim or the passion or the deliberate will of the majority, if expressed as law. Might is not right. I have the *power* to hold a child by the throat until he turns purple and dies. But I have not the right to do it. A State or a Territory has the power to steal a man's liberty or labor, and to hold him and his children's children forever in slavery. It has the power to do this to any man of any color, of any age, of any country, who is not strong enough to protect himself. But it has no more right to do it to an African than to an American or an Irishman, no more right to do it to the most ignorant and forsaken foreigner than to the prosperous and honored citizen of its own country. "Fiddle-faddle," says the Supreme Court of the United States, "an African doesn't count. He is only a negro. He has no

friends. Hit him again! And, now that we have decided the matter, what are you going to do about it?"

We are going to do what Patrick Henry did in Virginia, what James Otis and Samuel Adams did in Massachusetts, what the Sons of Liberty did in New York, ninety years ago. We are going to agitate, agitate, agitate. You say you want to rest. Very well, so do we—and don't blame us if you stuff your pillow with thorns. You say you are tired of the eternal negro. Very well; stop trying to turn a man into a thing because he happens to be black, and you'll stop our mouths at the same time. But while you keep at your work, be perfectly sure that we shall keep at ours. If you are up at five o'clock, we shall be up at four. We shall agitate, agitate, agitate, until the Supreme Court, obeying the popular will, proclaims that all men have original equal rights which government did not give and cannot justly take away.

The country *does* want rest, we all want rest. Our very civilization wants it—and we mean that it shall have it. It shall have rest—repose—refreshment of soul and reinvigoration of faculty. And that rest shall be of life and not of death. It shall not be a poison that pacifies restlessness in death, nor shall it be any kind of anodyne or patting or propping or bolstering —as if a man with a cancer in his breast would *be* well if he only said he was so and wore a clean shirt and kept his shoes tied. We want the rest of a *real* Union, not of a name, not of a great transparent sham, which good old gentlemen must coddle and pat and dandle, and declare wheedlingly is the dearest Union that ever

was, so it is; and naughty, ugly old fanatics sha'n't frighten the pretty precious—no, they sha'n't. Are we babies or men? This is not the Union our fathers framed—and when slavery says that it will tolerate a Union on condition that freedom holds its tongue and consents that the Constitution means first slavery at all costs and then liberty, if you can get it, it speaks plainly and manfully, and says what it means. There are not wanting men enough to fall on their knees and cry: "Certainly, certainly, stay on those terms. Don't go out of the Union—please don't go out; we'll promise to take great care in future that you have everything you want. Hold our tongues? Certainly. These people who talk about liberty are only a few fanatics —they are tolerably educated, but most of 'em are crazy; we don't speak to them in the street; we don't ask them to dinner; really, they are of no account, and if you'll really consent to stay in the Union, we'll see if we can't turn Plymouth Rock into a lump of dough."

I don't believe the Southern gentlemen want to be fed on dough. I believe they see quite as clearly as we do that this is not the sentiment of the North, because they can read the election returns as well as we. The thoughtful men among them see and feel that there is a hearty abhorrence of slavery among us, and a hearty desire to prevent its increase and expansion, and a constantly deepening conviction that the two systems of society are incompatible. When they want to know the sentiment of the North, they do not open their ears to speeches, they open their eyes, and go and look in

the ballot-box, and they see there a constantly growing resolution that the Union of the United States shall no longer be a pretty name for the extension of slavery and the subversion of the Constitution. Both parties stand front to front. Each claims that the other is aggressive, that its rights have been outraged, and that the Constitution is on its side. Who shall decide? Shall it be the Supreme Court? But that is only a co-ordinate branch of the government. Its right to decide is not mutually acknowledged. There is no universally recognized official expounder of the meaning of the Constitution. Such an instrument, written or unwritten, always means in a crisis what the people choose. The people of the United States will always interpret the Constitution for themselves, because that is the nature of popular governments, and because they have learned that judges are sometimes appointed to do partisan service.

Therefore our Constitution will always be the measure of our national morality; and if we were all sorry, it would still be true. *I* am not sorry, for it founds the government in the character of the people, and hence everything in the future depends upon the popular faith in the original principles of the government. If the people of this country *do* believe with the fathers that there are self-evident, original, and indefeasible human rights, then slavery will surely, quietly, and legally be terminated, under the Constitution of the United States. If they do *not* believe that there are such rights, then slavery will, just as surely, quietly, and legally, be established under the Constitution, which, as

the paramount law of the land, will legalize it in New York as well as in Alabama, leaving the policy of adopting it to be decided by individual judgment.

Such is the present aspect of the slavery question. For myself, I believe that the faith in which the government was founded still survives. I believe that the spirit of despotism which now says to the country, "I will rule or ruin," will hear the imperial voice of the conscience of the American people, recognizing that justice and prosperity walk hand in hand, saying, "You will do neither." I believe that God did not hide this continent through all time as the spot whereon a nation should be planted upon the only principle that can render a nation as permanent as the race, to suffer the experiment to fail within a century. I believe these truths to be self-evident — that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Do you believe it? If aye, let us go into the battle, and God speed the right.

IV

THE AMERICAN DOCTRINE OF LIBERTY

AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE Φ. B. K. SOCIETY OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY, JULY 17, 1862.

The following oration, first delivered in the summer of 1862 before the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University, was repeated forty times in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania, during the ensuing year.

The summer of 1862 was perhaps the darkest period of the war. In September, President Lincoln issued his preliminary Proclamation of Emancipation; on the first of January, 1863, this was followed by the final Proclamation.

In the directing and confirming of public sentiment and opinion this Address of Mr. Curtis was of great service.

THE AMERICAN DOCTRINE OF LIBERTY

WHILE the horizon mutters, and our hearts and ears are strained and listening—while brave men fight and fall, and the streets are sad with maimed and wasted soldiers—while every home sits waiting for its victim, we will not try to avoid the imperial interest of the hour. What are they fighting for? What are they falling for? Why is the grief that bends over the young dead returning, so lofty and resigned? Ask them as they lie there. Could they speak, they would answer: "Not in vain we fell. Life was well lost for our country."

But what is the cause of the country? We are fighting for the Constitution, for the Union and the government. But what is the great purpose behind these, to secure which they were established, and which consecrates and irradiates them to every true American? The answer is familiar. That purpose is the security of civil and religious liberty. The principle of our national existence is liberty secured by law. And by liberty we mean a freedom more comprehensive than any other people, living or dead, has contemplated. The achievement of all other nations should be only wings to Amer-

ican feet that they may hasten to heights that Greek and Roman, that Englishman and Frenchman and German, never trod. Were they wise? Let us be wiser. Were they noble? Let us be nobler. Were they just? Let us be juster. Were they free? Let our very air be freedom. Seated in the temperate latitudes of a new continent, with free hands, free hearts, free brains, and free tongues, we are called to a destiny as manifest as the great heroism and the lofty principle that made us a nation. That destiny is the utmost development of liberty. Let those who will, cower before the chances that attend all development. Let those who will, despond and despair of that perfect liberty with which God has made us all free. But let *us* now, here, in the solemn moments which are deciding if there is to be a distinctive America, resolve that even were the American system to fade from history, the American principle should survive immortal in our hearts. Let us, then, contemplate the American doctrine of liberty —not in any single direction, political, social, or moral; not in any necessary but temporary limitation or detail; but in all the ample and jubilant splendor of its spirit and promise, lifting our eyes to see how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of its approach, mountains that we are slowly climbing still, and are yet to climb, but the heavenly glory at whose summits is the harbinger of day.

It is especially important that we should all understand what the scope of that doctrine is, because of the incessant, unscrupulous, and specious effort which is made to belie, limit, and deride it. Our history for

many years is the story of a systematic endeavor to debauch the national conscience and destroy the American idea. By the falsification of history; by the basest appeal to prejudices of race and color; by the solemn sophistry of theologians who adduce the divine tolerance of wrong-doing as a divine sanction of wrong; by the cold and creaking effort of orators who, losing the sacred inspiration which is the very burden and glory of our history, virtually excuse this wanton war of some citizens upon the government, the nation, and human liberty, because others have constantly professed their faith in the fundamental principle of the government; by the most shameless falsehood and reckless pandering to selfishness and passion—the attempt is persistently making to destroy the very root of the American doctrine of liberty, which is the equality of human rights based upon our common humanity. The ultimate scope of that doctrine is the absolute personal and political freedom of every man: the right, that is to say, of every man to think and speak and act, subject to the equal rights of other men, protected in their exercise by common consent, or law. It declares that men are to be deprived of personal liberty only for crime, and that political liberty is the only sure guarantee of personal freedom. These are the postulates of our civilization. Consequently our normal social condition is a constant enlarging of liberty; and any connivance at the *permanent* restraint of personal, political, or moral freedom, except from essential incompetency, as of youth or insanity, is a disturbance of the divine order in human development.

The common humanity which is the source of all equality of right is attested by the universality of language and of religion in every race—word answering to word, sacred tradition linked with tradition; but its loveliest witness is the universal sympathy of man with man. The heart that leaps to-day with the resounding line of Homeric story; that finds in the Egyptian tombs of Beni Hassan the faint foreshadowing of Greek temples, and in the mute magnificence of the statues of Aboo Simbel a silence which it understands; the heart that bleeds with the wronged Indians of Hispaniola, and sings with the African mother bringing milk to the poor white man Mungo Park; that blesses the American Nathan Hale grieving that he had but one life to lose for his country, and the African Toussaint l'Ouverture dying a thousand deaths for his race among the Jura mountains—this is the unerring heart of man attesting his equal humanity. This is the eternal witness that, of every variety of race, complexion, capacity, intelligence, and civilization, it is the same human family that streams across the ages, its progress like the fluctuating mass of an advancing army, with its daring outposts and pickets, its steady centre, its remote wings, its dim and backward reserves, stretching many a mile from front to rear, over hills and valleys, over plains and rivers; here bivouacking in pastoral repose, there tossed upon the agonized verge of battle; but one great army still, with one heart beating along the endless line, with one celestial captain, one inspiring, consecrated hope.

But the common humanity of men and the consequent equality of human rights, although obvious

enough, have been but vaguely and sentimentally acknowledged, even in the freest and fairest epochs. Pericles in the funeral oration recounts the splendor, the strength, the tolerance of Athens. How lovely the picture still! In that soft air, on that bright plain, life for a few was all a festival. But in the golden noon of Athenian liberty there were five hundred thousand inhabitants in Attica, and more than four hundred thousand of them had no acknowledged rights whatever. When we speak of Athenian liberty we mean only the privilege of a few fortunate men. So, too, Rome was but a few families. The Roman republic was a patrician class, that slew Tiberius Gracchus, the republican. The language has no terms for human rights. The Roman mind could conceive an empire, but not a man. Rome could conquer the world, but humanity defied her. Spartacus was a barbarian, a pagan, and a slave. Escaping, he summoned other men whose liberty was denied. His call rang through Italy like an autumn storm through the forest, and men answered him like clustering leaves. He dashed them against the other men, thieves of their liberty, and three times he overwhelmed them. Flushed with victory and rage he turned his conquering sword at the very heart of Rome, and the terrified despot of the world at last crushed him with the energy of despair. He was not a man in Roman eyes, but Rome tottered before him, and fell before his descendants. He had no rights that Romans were bound to respect, but he wrote out in blood upon the plains of Lombardy his equal humanity with Cato and Cæsar. The tale is terrible. History shudders with it

still. But you and I, Plato and Shakespeare, the mightiest and the meanest men, were honored in Spartacus, for his wild revenge showed the brave scorn of oppression that beats immortal in the proud heart of man.

In all nations, indeed, there have been varying degrees of liberty. In Athens, where both personal and political freedom were totally unknown to the great bulk of the people, there was doubtless a marvellous liberty of thought and speech among the happy Athenian few. On the other hand, in Puritan New England, where almost every man was a voter, religious liberty was annihilated. Yet neither in pagan Greece nor in Christian New England was the true ground of liberty either seen or confessed. No, nor yet in old England to-day, upon whose shore we may set foot and hear the air ringing with the famous burst of Curran, that whoever touches that soil "stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation." The fiery rhetoric cannot make us forget what the intelligent English radical told Mr. Olmsted, that the farm laborers in certain districts of England—whom Mr. Olmsted himself describes as more like animals than any negro or Indian or Chinese or Malay he ever saw—although forming the most numerous single class in the country, are not thought of in forming an estimate of national character. That rhetoric cannot prevent our wondering if a social system is yet safely adjusted, in which the Marquis of Breadalbane rides upon his own estate seventy miles from sea to sea, while five millions of factory laborers squeeze through life upon starvation wages. No siren eloquence can

sing away the perception that British society is but a modified feudalism; and spite of the Englishmen whose names are hallowed, of the good and noble men who make Shakespeare and Milton possible Englishmen, who so plainly see and clearly say the truth of our great struggle—despite these men, the instinctive sympathy of England with the Rebellion rather than with the government is not commercial only; it is deeper than that: it is organic; it is social and political. The comely feudalism of England—a system of class privilege, not of human right—stretches out its hand, muffled in cotton, to the hideous hag of human slavery over the sea, in whom it owns a ghastly kindred with itself.

But the habit of domestic political freedom in the American colonies, which was almost universal, combined with the general education which such freedom secures, and which their circumstances favored, forced the thinking men in the colonies to understand the grounds of the liberty which they instinctively demanded. In great emergencies men always rise to cardinal principles, as, in sailing out of sight of land, the mariner looks up and steers by the sun and stars. In their golden maturity of wisdom and strength, with a profound faith in principle which no other body of men have rivalled, and which their own sons have not even comprehended, our fathers began with God and human nature, founding their government upon truths which they disdained to argue, declaring them to be self-evident. The wise West Indian boy, Alexander Hamilton, cried with the bright ardor of conviction: "The sacred

rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or musty records. They are written as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." James Otis, the fiery tongue of the early Revolution, declared that, "The Colonists are men, the Colonists are therefore free-born, for by the law of nature all men are free-born, black or white." "Amen," said the gallant Richard Henry Lee, a Virginian when Virginian was a name of honor, "the right to life and the right to liberty are inalienable." John Adams responded, "My friends, human nature itself is evermore an advocate for liberty." The town of Providence, in voting for a Continental Congress, declared "personal liberty an essential part of the natural rights of mankind." "Freedom," said the Virginian *Gazette*, "is the birthright of all mankind, Africans as well as Europeans." Then came the great Virginians, Madison, Mason, Patrick Henry, Edmund Randolph, and their peers, with their Declaration of Rights, "All men are by nature equally free and have inherent rights, namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety." And at last Thomas Jefferson, happy among men that his hand was chosen, gathered in one glowing pæan the inspiration of the time, declaring the truth to be self-evident that all men are created equal. The fathers said what they meant and meant what they said. They meant *all* men, not *some* men, and, calling God and the world to witness, they *said* all men. The Sons of the Morning sang together, and the clear chorus

rang through the world. And while one burning phrase, "Give me liberty or give me death," keeps our greatest orator's name fresh in our hearts forever, where is he who dares to call that principle "a glittering generality"—that declaration of the only true ground of national honor and national peace the "passionate manifesto of a revolutionary war"?

> "Who but must laugh if such a man there be?
> Who would not weep if Atticus were he?"

The American doctrine founds liberty in the natural equality of men. The conspiracy against liberty plants itself here and elsewhere upon a denial of that equality. Politicians whose hopes rest upon the popular ignorance and prejudice, and not upon the popular intelligence, furiously sneer at the idea of equality. It is important, therefore, that every man should understand what human equality is. It is an elemental lesson, but the attack is made at the very foundation and must be met there.

How then are we born equal? Clearly we are not all, or any of us, equal in capacity, in circumstance, or condition. We are not equal in our height or weight; in the color of our hair or eyes. Does the doctrine imply that Benedict Arnold is equal in honor to George Washington? that Martin Farquhar Tupper is equal in genius to Shakespeare? or that Robert Toombs is equal in honor and heroic patriotism to Robert Smalls? No—any more than it declares General Tom Thumb to be the equal in stature of the Belgian Giant, or Lucrezia Borgia of equal humanity with Florence Nightingale.

The equality which underlies our doctrine of liberty is an equality of right.

And there is no limitation to this right. It is not true of some men and untrue of others. If any man has it, all men have it. What right have you to your life and liberty that I, being guiltless, have not to mine? And if any man or society of men deny them to me and claim to take them away, what is the authority? What *can* it be but brute force, which would have submitted Plato to any Persian bully, and did submit Christ to Herod. I am a weaker man than you—am I less a man? If you steal my life or liberty for that, a stronger man may by the same right steal yours. I am a duller man than you—am I less a man? If for that reason you defraud me, beware of wiser men than yourself. I am a darker man than you—am I less a man? If for that cause you enslave me, the idiot albinos are the born kings of men.

The foundation of liberty in natural right was no boast of passionate rhetoric from the mouths of the fathers. They were neither dreamers nor visionaries, and they were much too earnest to be mere rhetoricians. Thus they were not hypocrites in the question of slavery. Their common-sense is the most contemptuous censure of our modern sophistry. We believe in the rights of man, they said, and of course slavery is wrong. But it is a question of fact as well as principle. The slaves are entitled to their personal freedom as much as we; now how, under all the circumstances, shall they soonest regain it with the least loss of every kind of liberty to every man in the land? We no more defend slavery

because we hold slaves, than when we are ill we defend disease. Every man ought to be well, but, being sick, the question is how most safely and soonest to be cured. Therefore when they established the government they made a fundamental law so peacefully expansive that it should gladly allow the disappearance of slavery which they contemplated and the utmost development of the freedom which they designed. Mindful of the rights of the political communities of which they were all members, they did not forget the rights of man which political communities existed to protect.

The last words of the Continental Congress, retiring before the new government, have a startling and tragical significance as we hear them through the raging tempest of this civil war—"Let it never be forgotten that the rights for which America has contended are the rights of human nature." In that solemn hour they charged us. Their lips, glowing with the words of a faith that shames us, calling God to witness, told us not to forget. We *have* forgotten—oh, for the broken hearts, for the costly lives, for the blood-red land!—we *have* forgotten, and God is entering into judgment.

So august is the American doctrine of liberty. It ought not to be less, for this only is absolutely universal. It is so vast that it promises endless progress. It is so pure that it requires the sincerest faith. It is so true that virtue alone can achieve it. Do we believe this doctrine? Do we believe that the right of personal, political, and moral liberty inheres in human nature and belongs to every man? I do not ask whether we think every Malay or Patagonian ought to vote, or whether

the Grand Lama ought to turn himself into a Constitutional President of Thibet, but whether we agree that the cardinal principles of progressive civilization are the clear perception that every man is entitled to this liberty, and that our duty is the unwearied effort wisely to secure it for him. That in this country we owe a double allegiance, that we are citizens of a State and also of a nation, that the fundamental law leaves to the States in time of peace the absolute regulation of their domestic affairs, are truths which in no way conflict with our obligations as morally responsible men incessantly to work for the enlightenment and elevation of all men. Nor, because I am a loyal citizen of the State of New York and of the United States, and honorably bound to respect the right of every State to care for itself, am I required to shut my eyes or hold my tongue if the State of California shall legalize murder or theft, or the State of Massachusetts shall enact that all citizens who are more than sixty years old shall be enslaved. I may say —nay, I am a traitor to my State, to my country, to my race, and to my Creator, if I do *not* say—that such laws are most dangerous and wicked; and for the very simple reason that whatever strikes at the *natural* rights of any man in any State wounds every man in all the States and pierces the heart of the nation. And manifestly it is only by the freest possible discussion in all the States of every question which affects the national policy that that policy can be wisely determined. When, therefore, a man says regretfully that if the discussion of human rights could only have been suppressed in this country there would have been no civil war, he says

merely that if we had but quietly consented to renounce the most precious of our Constitutional rights, we should have surrendered all the rest without a struggle. And he speaks truly. For if, by common consent and a deplorably false conception of State rights, the citizens of this country had allowed their tongues to be tied, had suffered the Constitution to be nullified, as it was in half the country, and no voice had protested and warned us of the sure and stealthy destruction of the principle of liberty in our national government by that of despotism, then when a little while had revealed the ghastly spectacle of that despotism crowning itself with the iron band of absolute power, it might well have been too late to recover the liberty at whose loss we had connived. O friends! we may pardon that voice, may we not, if it were acrimonious, passionate, vituperative, fierce? Yes; but so with angry, jagged dart the lightning stabs the stagnant body of the summer air—a blinding glare, an awful crash—but lo! the soft splendors of the sunset follow, then shine the stars, and at last the ambrosial air of morning breathes coolness, health, and peace upon a world renewed.

Taught by terrible experience, therefore, the danger of forgetting our doctrine of liberty, let us look at one or two of the more specious ways in which it is practically thwarted or denied; let us see where we are weak, that we may know where to strengthen ourselves.

And, first, of liberty of thought and speech. These are indeed expressly affirmed in our fundamental laws; but you remember the startlingly direct remark of De Tocqueville, "I know no country in which there is so

little true independence of mind and freedom of discussion as in America." The reason is obvious. Political and public success with us depend upon popular favor and party votes; but, as the great mass of men everywhere are comparatively uninstructed and prejudiced, the condition of their favor is rather conformity to their prejudices than appeal to their noblest instincts. Yet the power of public opinion in this country and the danger of its debasement cannot be exaggerated, when you reflect that progress is truly practicable only when it is the result of the popular conviction. Until the people are persuaded, the law is premature; and a law to be truly respected must represent the conviction of the nation. Therefore the real patriot in this country is he who sees most clearly what the nation ought to desire, who does what he can by plain and brave speech to influence it to that desire, and then urges and supports the laws which express it. But as public opinion is necessarily so powerful with us, we fear it and flatter it, and so pamper it into a tyrant. How the country teems with conspicuous men, scholars, orators, politicians, divines, advocates, public teachers all, whose speeches, sermons, letters, votes, actions, are a prolonged, incessant falsehood and sophism; a soft and shallow wooing of the Public Alexander and the Public Cromwell, telling him that he has no crook in his neck and no wart on his nose. How many of our public men, our famous orators, have sharply criticised our life and tendency? How many have said what they thought, rather than what they supposed we wanted to hear? When we hear them or read them, instead of breathing the pure

mountain air of insight and inspiration, we are conscious of the sweet but sickly breath of marshes and stagnant waters. There are critics, there are orators, whose tongues, like whips of scorpions, have lashed our national weaknesses and sins; but they have struck at their peril, and obloquy, contumely, private slander, and public indignation have been the thumb-screws, the boots, the rack, and the fagot with which American public opinion has punished American citizens who, exercising only their constitutional rights, have honestly said what they honestly thought.

In a system like ours, where almost every man has a vote and votes as he chooses, public opinion is really the government. Whoever panders to it is training a tyrant for our master. Whoever enlightens it lifts people towards peace and prosperity. But there is no method of enlightening it but the freest discussion. Stop the mouth and you stop civilization. Chain down every human right, but leave the right of speech free, and it will presently unchain all the rest.

And here let me say a word to avoid a possible misapprehension. We are engaged in a formidable and threatening struggle for the defence of the very existence of civil order, without which there can be no secure enjoyment of any right whatever, and for the maintenance of a government which by its lawful operation secures more justice, more liberty, more prosperity, and a more equal chance than could be hoped for from any other conceivable form. For the rescue and preservation of that government we stand in arms. And when we accepted war, we accepted the conditions of war. When

the rebellion announced itself at Sumter, there were but two methods open to us. One was to yield to it and avoid war by surrender and destruction of the government; the other was to take up arms. Instinctively the nation chose war, and that choice was the earnest of its triumph. But war is totally inconsistent with the unrestricted enjoyment of personal and political rights. However consecrated, however inevitable, war secures its ends by brute force. It must have unity of sentiment or, that being impossible, it must disembarrass itself of criticism which would be armed opposition if it dared. When, therefore, battle begins, debate ends, because then words are things. Whoever helps the enemy by his tongue or his hand necessarily does it at his peril. "Why," wrote Washington to Governor Trumbull of Connecticut—"why should persons who are preying upon the vitals of their country be suffered to stalk at large, whilst we know they will do us every mischief in their power?" Therefore when war is unavoidable, and holy as ours is, we must embrace it wholly and heartily for the sake of peace. You cannot carry the olive-branch and the sword together, for the olive will hide the sword, or the sword the olive. Whoever takes the sword in one hand and the olive-branch in the other is half-hearted as he is half-armed, and meets half way the shameful defeat which his craven soul solicits. Whoever *means* war—and no one else has a right to *make* war—takes the sword in both hands, hews his way to perfect victory, and then covers himself all over with olive-branches. War willingly accepted is the willing renunciation of rights for a certain time and for a particu-

lar purpose. All our rights are threatened by this rebellion. And it is to save the fundamental guarantee of them all that some are temporarily suspended, as when your eyesight is threatened you assent to temporary darkness in order to escape permanent blindness.

Do we ask what is our security against the absolute destruction of those rights which war suspends? Nothing but the character and intelligence of the people. In our system the government and the army are only the people. And it is by popular assent alone that any rights are suspended. The people in the Constitution have clothed the President in time of war with almost absolute power. And well for us in this solemn hour that they are given to one who unites Washington's integrity to the democratic faith of Jefferson; whose loyal heart beats true to the heart of the people; who knows that their confidence is his only strength, and that the faster his foot and the heavier his hand, the quicker and surer is the safety of all the liberties of every man in the land.

But, again, our doctrine of liberty founds equal political knowledge upon natural human equality, and utterly repudiates arbitrary exclusion.

Yet, not to insist upon the exception of the sexes, which you will regard as visionary, I pass to another. It is not only sex which works a deprivation of acknowledged right, but color also. If you commit a crime you properly lose your political privileges. But if you are born of the wrong color you lose them also, or you enjoy them upon the most stringent conditions. There is a criminal complexion in America. If a man is born of any degree of duskiness, the American assumption is

that he is an ignorant, degraded, idle, knavish rascal; and the assumption is founded upon the fact that we have done our best to make him so. In my State of New York the most industrious, temperate, intelligent, moral, and valuable citizen, if he be of the criminal complexion, must have lived three times as long in the State as any other citizen, and must have paid a tax that no other voter pays, before he can enjoy the right of voting. It is the sheerest nonsense to assume that such a man is a bad or dangerous or incompetent citizen because he is not a white man, precisely as it would be to suppose that an idle, worthless vagabond is a safe citizen because he *is* a white man. It is conceivable that free society should disfranchise the common drunkards, the hopelessly idle and ignorant and brutal, as well as those who have no respect for the rights of man, of whatever race or color they might be; but to proscribe virtue, intelligence, and industry, which are the essential guarantees of civilization, because of the color of the man, is as reasonable as to deny men the rights of citizenship because they have red hair or squint or wear square-toed shoes. Such a practice founds political liberty upon accident or incident, which have no moral character whatever, instead of grounding it upon natural human right. But we enjoy all our natural rights, not because we are of the Semitic or non-Semitic families, not because we are Caucasians or Mongolians, not because we are Saxons or Celts, but because we are men. The difference of race has no more to do with right than the difference of height or strength. The moment we begin with any arbitrary exclusion we are drifting

straight into despotism. If we may deny a man's rights because he is of a certain color, we may equally deny them because he is of a certain race or country or religion or profession.

And we shall do so, for injustice breeds injustice. The habitual denial of personal liberty to some persons of a certain color in this country, and of practical political liberty to the rest of the race, has naturally smoothed the way to other more dangerous invasions of the American doctrine. A few years since I met a farmer in the cars in Indiana, who forcibly expressed his policy by saying that he wished every darned negro in the country would kill a darned Paddy, and then be hung for it. We laugh at the extravagance of the proposition, but we have recently witnessed the career of a party which virtually aimed to carry out this ludicrous scheme; not, indeed, by hanging, but by disfranchisement. Its object was to leave those who were already deprived of personal liberty to their fate, and to restrict political liberty to men of a certain color who were born in the country and were generally of one religious faith. Our doctrine of liberty was already denied in the case of colored men. This new party proposed to add to that denial those of foreign birth, aiming especially at the Irishmen, who were the chief emigrants from foreign lands, and who were mostly of one church. It was simply a proposition of national suicide, for it sought to create a most dangerous, because an immense, disfranchised body of citizens. With unconscious humor it adopted the dark-lantern of the midnight thief as its symbol. With an infallible and un-

suspected satire, the popular instinct dubbed it Know-Nothing, while this most peculiarly un-American of our political parties completed its comedy by soberly claiming to be distinctively American. But it is a happy fact for any man who believes that political liberty is based upon the rights of all men and not upon the whims of some, that its career was the shortest of any party in our history.

But our late history shows us a far more dangerous, because more subtle and specious, denial of the doctrine of liberty—a denial which one of the nimblest and most adroit of our modern politicians thought to be the surest trap to catch the Presidency. Mr. Douglas, who had a frenzy to be President, who had watched very closely the current of political sentiment in the country, was persuaded that the long habit of indifference to human rights had deadened the sense of justice in the national mind. He was not a thoughtful scholar, and therefore did not know from the experience of all history that there is no law more absolute than the eternal restoration of the moral balance of the world by the vindication of justice. Nor had his wide and familiar intercourse with the most demoralized and degraded political epoch in our history supplied that necessary knowledge. He was the representative politician of an era which had apparently lost all faith in ideas. His favorite dogma was the most satirical insult to the American people, for it implied that their ignorant enthusiasm would honor *him* most who most cunningly denied the most cardinal principle of their national life. Apparently his dogma was the simple

assertion of the right of the majority to govern, and nothing could be fairer than that. This is a democratic country, he said; the majority rules. Unhappily, we quarrel about slavery in the territories. Very well; let us settle the question by applying the fundamental rule. Let the majority decide. Let the majority of people in the territory say whether they will have slaves. What can be fairer? cried Mr. Douglas, leering at the country. What can be fairer? echoed a thousand caucuses. The manner was blandishing. The sophism was sparkling. It was a champagne that bubbled and whirled in the popular brain, until many a wise man feared that the conscience and common-sense of the nation were wholly drugged. It was the doctrine of the sheerest moral indifference. "Liberty, human rights, they are only names," he said, and with a frightful composure and utter moral confusion he added, "I take the part of the white man against the black, and of the black man against the alligator." I am neither for slavery nor liberty, he said. I don't care which. But the nation, after all, was not drugged; it *did* care. Its interest, if not its conscience, was alarmed. His jovial reference of the rights of human nature to the whim or hatred or supposed interest of a majority was overborne by the refusal to leave them even to a majority. The two great parties of the country rallied around the essential principle involved. It was at once a question of liberty and of despotism. The parties were in earnest. Yet he could not be in earnest, for he was only playing for the Presidency. "'The mills of God'!—there are no mills of God," he smiled and said; and instantly he was caught up and

politically ground to powder between the whirring millstones of liberty and slavery.

I have called the principle dangerous. But we cannot exaggerate its danger. It is a poison which works still in our political system, and it is as fatal to human liberty as it is repugnant to the spirit of our government and to the generous instincts of enlightened men, for it is the absolute denial of the American postulate of the equal and inherent rights of man and that governments exist to secure these rights. It places the life, liberty, property, and welfare of every citizen, whatever his complexion or race or nationality, at the mercy of a majority. It was asserted, indeed, of a Territory; but if it be tolerable doctrine anywhere in the land that the majority can *rightfully* dispose of the liberty and other rights of a minority or of a single innocent man, then it is tolerable anywhere; in this State, for instance. And if, acting in due legal form, a majority should decide that the blind men should be hung, the crime would be strictly justified by this principle. "Oh, no," you say; "the State Constitution secures life and liberty except for crime." Yes, but *why* does it secure them? Simply because you have a right to your life and your liberty, which God, not the Constitution, gave you. The majority may refuse to allow you the exercise of that right, for a thousand Neros are more powerful than one Nero. They may express their refusal as law, and enforce it by the bayonet; as, a hundred years ago, it was the English law in Ireland that if a son informed against his father as a Papist, the father's property should be given to the son;

and as, eighteen hundred years ago in Judea, it was the law of Herod that all children under two years of age should be murdered. What then? Would it be right, justifiable, humane? Would any heart that was not black with passion, or mind that was not utterly seared with sophistry, excuse it for a moment? No; the human instinct repels and scorns the plea. It is the rule of the King of Dahomey, of the pirate-ship, of the slave-market. Against the American doctrine of liberty it is the very unpardonable sin; and it is a happy augury that the effort to make it the creed of what was called the Democratic party in this country shivered and annihilated that party by driving from it all the adherents of the great, true, universal democratic party of all times and of all countries, which eternally maintains that men as well as majorities have rights.

The tendency of all men and societies is to disregard moral principles as something too visionary, too abstract and impracticable, for working-men and actual life. But it is as sure as sunrise that men and nations, either in their own lives and characters or in those of their descendants, will pay the penalty of injustice and immorality. For injustice breeds ignorance, superstition, bestiality, barbarism, and the conflict of passions; while justice fosters intelligence, industry, mutual respect, peace, and good-will. We have not believed it, but the loss of our nationality will be the cost of our further disbelief. In all the history of civilization there is no spectacle so humiliating as the conduct of this nation towards one unhappy race. Their only offence is that we have injured them. The only excuse that we

urge is that they submit. At the South a servile people, often degraded almost out of humanity, they are treated with the same familiarity as the Arab treats his horse, but with more contempt. At the North, of insignificant numbers, they are held in the pitiful scorn that paralyzes energy and hope. Well, they did not wish to be here. They are not a nomadic race; they would never have come if they had not been stolen for our profit. Do we say that they show no desire of liberty, that we could respect their manhood if they would only rise and cut their masters' throats, but that their tame subordination to slavery proves them fit only to be slaves? True, if these four millions were of a less mild and flexible race, then, as the Syrian slaves of Rome closed in a death-grapple with the empire, nor relaxed their hold until a million lives were lost, so these slaves would long ago have hewn their way to freedom, or in blind despair the tortured Samson would have grasped the columns of the social temple and have dragged it down in direful ruin. But since this was not to be, since they are so soft and hopeless and submissive a race, we have believed that justice had no remedy, and that a race which could not help itself would be forever unavenged. For many a blithe year we haughty children of the Saxon race had seen our borders enlarging, our population increasing, our States multiplying, our churches and schools and warehouses and railways and ships and telegraphs rising and swarming on every hand; had seen the whole continent shining with our splendid statistics; and in all the glittering years we had not felt the cotton harsh to the touch nor

the sugar bitter to the taste, though we knew that all that softness and sweetness grew in the ruin of a race. Our very birth-throe was justice, and we were unjust. Our very breath was human rights, and we destroyed them. Our very life was liberty, and we denied it. Like Belshazzar, the nation sat feasting, and if for evanescent moments it saw the awful words upon the wall, the feast was so splendid that its eyes were dazzled. We sought excuses and evasions. It was a State matter, a local law, an institution doomed to perish before our progress. It was a pity—yes, it was a pity, but don't talk about it. Justice, liberty, human rights—yes, yes; but the thing is so complicated, and rights are so dim and shadowy, and gold is so bright and hard and doubles itself every year. And we sighed and smiled and sighed again. It is a State matter, a local law, a system doomed to perish—and even while we spoke it suddenly towered before us a hideous, overpowering presence, like the genie before the fisherman, kicked the casket of compromise and restraint into the sea, insolently declared itself the supreme lord of the land, and the doctrine of liberty a treasonable lie.

We could be unjust, we thought, for if these slaves were men they would revenge themselves. Well, they have not grasped the sword, but how awful is their vengeance! They sit dismayed and uncertain while civil war shakes its fiery torch across the land, dropping blood in its hideous path, stabbing wives, mothers, sisters, lovers, to the heart; dragging our young, our brave, our beautiful down to ghastly death; while

through the fiery storm of wrath the voice of God cries to our shrinking hearts, as to cowering Cain in the Garden, "Where is Abel, where is Abel, thy brother?"

Gentlemen, by the lurid light of this war we can read our duty very plainly. We are to remember that in every free nation the public safety and progress require a double allegiance—to the form and to the spirit of the government. By forgetting the spirit of our own, we have imperilled both its form and its existence. Therefore, by the sublime possibility of the great commonwealth made to be an intelligent, industrious, and free people; conscious of our power against harm from within and without; by distance and character removed from foreign ambition, by watchful intelligence from domestic division; with justice as the bond of union at home and the pledge of respect abroad; by the warm blood of our best and dearest gushing at this moment for this faith—let us vow, with the majesty of millions of consenting hearts and voices, that we will never again, God helping us, forget that the cause of the United States *is* the cause of human nature, and that the permanent life of the nation is the liberty of *all* its children.

V

POLITICAL INFIDELITY

A LECTURE

MARCH, 1864

The following lecture was delivered more than fifty times in the course of 1864 and 1865, in different States, from Maine to Maryland.

POLITICAL INFIDELITY

AFTER the passionate heats and storms of summer the harvest is reaped in the field, and the fruit upon the trees is ripe. So, after the Revolutionary throes in which this nation was born, after the fierce political struggle of its youth ending in sanguinary war, after doubt and darkness and despair almost, every generous American heart is inclined to believe that its faith is becoming sight, and that the golden gates of the future are about to open and reveal to us our whole country, truly united, truly prosperous, truly free, and therefore truly at peace.

But all speculation upon peace and union is useless until we have settled one preliminary question, and that is, whether the war proves that, however faithful to our principles we may be, still a free, popular government must necessarily fail; or whether it shows, not that our principles are impracticable, but that in the past we have been unfaithful to them.

For, if the war be the result of our Political Infidelity; if we have suffered our plain fundamental principles to be disregarded and denied until the disregard became haughty contempt and the denial bloody rebellion;

then it is not the popular system, but *we*, who failed, and union and peace are possible only by our returning fidelity to our principles.

Now, the spring of our government, as of every free popular government, is public opinion, and the country is really governed by those who direct that. This is what Fletcher of Saltoun meant in saying that if he could make the songs of a people, whoever would might make the laws. This is the meaning of the saying that the song of Lillibullero drove James II. out of the three kingdoms. When an idea is so familiar and precious to a people that they sing it, the government must conform, or the government will come down, like the walls of Jericho before the blast of the ram's horn. Thus it was that in the year 1840, when singing was first introduced into our political meetings, there was universal discontent with the state of public affairs. That discontent needed no argument. It expressed itself in a song, a President was sung straight out of office, and "Van, Van, was a used-up man."

Earl Russell, replying a year since at Blairgowrie to Mr. Sumner's speech upon our foreign relations, sneers at us and misrepresents us; but his lordship acknowledges that the British government will still be neutral—and why? Because, he says, the majority of the British people sympathize with the government of the United States. He does not say a majority of the governing class represented in Parliament, but of the unrepresented British people whose opinion governs the governing class.

Thus it is that public opinion, good or bad, is really

the law—under the forms or over them. Demoralize it, therefore, and you degrade the government, so that under the name and form of a popular republic you have the most terrible despotism and the worst of tyrannies.

If, then, public opinion be so transcendently powerful, the cardinal principle of a free government is that, in time of peace, there shall be no interference with its instruction. Absolute freedom of speech is the test of political fidelity in a free government. Have we satisfied that test? Was De Tocqueville wrong, thirty years ago, when he said that in America the majority coerced debate? Does our political history, ending with the shot at Sumter, show that we have jealously guarded the right of free discussion? If we have everywhere in this country sought and tolerated the most searching debate of public questions; if from every platform and stump, from every pulpit and press, in the remotest corner of the land, there has been for the last eighty years a full, frank, and perfectly free discussion of public differences, and the voting has been as free and honest as the talking—then our system has failed; then the war is not the consequence of our political infidelity, but springs from causes that make our nationality impossible.

What, then, is the truth? What says history?

Fifty-two years ago an erect and nervous figure darted into the arena of our politics with a shrill cry for war with England, and there remained conspicuous until twelve years since, when, with the cry, *Delenda est Roma*—the nation must be destroyed—he disappeared from human eyes forever.

Calhoun was the apostle of the Southern Policy, which was to secure the permanent political predominance of the Southern section of the country. The social system of that section was an aristocracy founded upon human slavery. Therefore he truly said, "We are essentially aristocratic." Therefore his most accomplished disciple, Jefferson Davis, says, "We seceded to rid ourselves of the rule of the majority." The political problem of the Southern Policy, therefore, was twofold. First, in a free, popular government to maintain an aristocracy; second, in a system sprung from equal rights and fair play for all men, to extend and perpetuate slavery. There was but one way to do it. Knowing that the instincts of the American people, at once intelligent, prosperous, and free, were both generous and noble, and that frank discussion constantly tended to humanize and elevate the public opinion which truly governed the country, Mr. Calhoun saw that the only safety and success of the Southern Policy lay in the demoralization of the national character. And to this tremendous and terrible task he devoted his life.

Gathering all his forces he intrenched himself upon State Rights, upon the timidity of trade, upon the dull despotism of party spirit, and upon the jealousy of race; and opened fire all along the line upon the fidelity of the American people. His purpose was to silence debate. If he could do that his victory was sure. He knew that if he destroyed the tap-root the tree must fall. He knew that if he poisoned the fountain the river would be a stream of death. His brain was the huge reservoir of rebellion, and all the floods of theories,

arguments, and appeals which have reared and rattled in the speeches of the Southern leaders and their Northern allies until they overflowed in civil war, are merely the few false principles of Calhoun filtered through baser minds and mouths.

How then did the plan of national demoralization prosper? Do you think it was too stupendous, too hopeless? Do you think that human slavery is so obviously wrong, and exclusive political power in a republic, founded upon injustice, is so manifestly absurd, that the popular instinct will indignantly sweep away a policy that depends upon them?

So long as people said, "Oh, yes, slavery *is* a very bad thing; but there is nothing to be done about it, you know," the Southern Policy smiled politely and worked diligently at its web in which the country was entangled. But when a few other people said, "Yes, slavery *is* a very bad thing, and will destroy the nation if the nation does not destroy it," Mr. Calhoun knew that the open battle was at hand. He sprang to his feet. "What does it mean?" asked he, the representative man of the South, of Mr. Webster, the representative of the North. "Nothing, nothing; a rub-a-dub agitation. A glass of wine with you, Mr. Calhoun." A rub-a-dub agitation! Oh, yes, so it was. It was the beating of the roll-call at midnight. The camp slept no more; and morning breaks at last in the storm of a war that shakes the world.

The passionate chapter in our history known as the Abolition Agitation is the story of the vindication of

free speech in the United States. The abolitionists asked only to be allowed their Constitutional rights of speech. Could American citizens ask less? What was the whole force of the government for but to protect Mr. Wendell Phillips discussing slavery in New Orleans, as it protected Mr. Robert Toombs discussing slavery in Boston? Was John C. Calhoun more an American citizen than William Lloyd Garrison? American citizens may hold and express what views they will, and the moment the antislavery men were mobbed for the expression of opinion their meetings became the citadel of the American union and government. Not in November, 1837, when Elijah Lovejoy was shot dead in Illinois for exercising his plainest right as I am doing now; not in October, 1835, when Garrison was mobbed in Boston for saying that slavery was wrong; but in October, 1833—when in the city of New York a body of men met at Tammany Hall in response to an invitation signed "Many Southrons," and, marching to the Chatham Street chapel to rout a peaceful meeting for discussion, marched against the rights of every American citizen, against the Union and the government—from that moment the cause of the abolitionist was the cause of America.

The fight was desperate, and the Southern Policy, already firmly intrenched, seemed to conquer. The Church, the college, trade, fashion, the vast political parties, took Calhoun's side against popular government, and sneered, frowned, and raged at its defenders. Remember, I am not now considering the wisdom or taste of the abolition method with regard to the spe-

cific end of emancipation, but only with regard to the fundamental right of free speech. In Boston, in Philadelphia, in New York, in Utica, in New Haven, and in a hundred villages, when an American citizen proposed to say what he thought of a great public question—for this was all he asked — he was insulted, mobbed, chased, and maltreated. Lovejoy was shot at Alton—as much a martyr as Nathan Hale in the Revolution—and the country scowled and muttered angrily, "Served him right." Grand juries presented citizens who in time of peace wished to discuss public topics as guilty of sedition. The legislatures were called upon to make their speeches indictable offences. In the Legislature of Rhode Island, in February, 1836, such a bill was reported. The Governor of New York favored such a bill. The Governor of Ohio actually delivered a citizen of that State to the demand of Kentucky, to be tried for helping a slave to escape. The Governor of Massachusetts said that all discussion of the subject which tended to incite insurrection had been held to be an indictable offence. Of course *any* discussion could be so interpreted, and the governor might as properly have said that all discussion of free trade tended to an insurrection of factory operatives and must be suppressed by law. The most eminent civilians of every profession denounced the agitation—that is to say, the open discussion of a public question—as treason; and at length Amos Kendal, the Postmaster-General of the United States, in order to help the Southern Policy destroy popular government, virtually put his hands into the mails and robbed them.

These were public facts. In private life, as you know, the Planter sat at Northern tables, and, as he had the right, defended the imbruting of men and the stealing of their wages, the whipping of women and the selling of children; while Northern Politeness, mincing, muffled, timorous, and gagged, smiled blandly and passed the bottle. They were human rights that were destroyed. They were our fundamental principles that were destroyed. It was the planting of snares and gins and pitfalls where our children were to walk—and Northern Politeness smiled blandly and passed the bottle.

You thought the task of national demoralization too stupendous. But, after thirty years of persistent, unscrupulous effort upon the part of the Southern Policy, what were its prospects?

The statesman who among the public men of Calhoun's later days was the contrasting figure to the ardent and haughty Carolinian, Mr. Seward of New York, spoke in October, 1856, at Detroit. His speech was called "The Dominant Class," and our national condition was described with the utmost detail and care. No speech was ever calmer or sadder. I remember reading it in the cars on a still autumn day, and the bright pageant of the falling year gathered a melancholy significance as I read. For what was the picture that the orator painted? It was that of the absolute subjugation of the country to the Southern Policy. Every great office of State was then and long had been held by its ministers. The American foreign ambassadors—who are, as Americans, *ex officio*, the representatives of human rights, were everywhere silent or were the smooth

apologists of that policy; so that the world sneered as it listened, and laughed at a republic founded upon liberty and afraid to speak the word at home. The same policy was served by every Committee in Congress, and when the Vice-President of the United States, who was its servant in the Senate, left his seat there, it was filled by another like himself, while all the attendants who stood around him, the doorkeepers, messengers, sergeants-at-arms, down to the very pages who noiselessly skimmed the floor, were passive tools of the dominant spirit. The speech showed that beyond the superb walls of the Capitol—which Senator Benton had long solemnly warned the country was built by the consent of the Southern leaders only that they might seize and occupy it when the time came—the whole vast system of national offices was but a huge fortification of the Southern Policy; that every little post-office and custom-house berth in the land was a loop-hole whence the whole field could be surveyed and a shot fired at the very heart of the American doctrine of liberty; and, to crown all, that the most absolute subservience to that policy was decreed as the test of nationality; while its leaders did not hesitate to declare with taunt and sneer that any serious effort of the country, however lawfully made, to change that policy, would strike the tocsin of civil war. We lived under a threat. We cowered under the crack of the whip. And what we called our Union-saving policy was submission to the holders of the whip lest we should feel it upon our backs.

Such was the fearful picture that the orator painted. Was the picture true? While we ask, another witness

rises in the extremest South to confirm the testimony of the Northern statesman. You would not believe Mr. Seward, perhaps, because he was out of power and might paint black for a partisan purpose. Will you, then, believe Alexander H. Stephens of Georgia, who painted precisely the same picture, but in the brightest colors? In the summer of 1859 he comes home from Congress to his friends and neighbors, and tells them why he is going to retire from public life. Does some good soul imagine, or did it when the Rebellion began, that Mr. Stephens was a Union man? Mr. Seward's words are in your ears; listen to Mr. Stephens in the summer sunshine six years ago: "As matters now stand, so far as the sectional questions are concerned I see no cause of danger either to the Union or to Southern security in it. The former has always been to me, and ought to be to you, *subordinate* to the latter." "There is not now a spot of the public territory of the United States over which the national flag floats where slavery is excluded by the law of Congress, and the highest tribunal of the land has decided that Congress has no power to make such a law." "At this time there is not a ripple upon the surface. The country was never in a profounder quiet."

Do you comprehend the terrible significance of these words?

He stops; he sits down. The summer sun sets over the fields of Georgia, the land of peace. Good-night, Mr. Stephens — a long good-night. Look from your window — how calm it is! Upon Missionary Ridge, upon Lookout Mountain, upon the heights of Dalton,

upon the spires of Atlanta, silence and solitude; the peace of the Southern Policy of Slavery and Death. But look! hark! Through the great five years before you a light is shining—a sound is ringing. It is the gleam of Sherman's bayonets, it is the roar of Grant's guns; it is the red daybreak and wild morning music of peace indeed, the peace of National Life and Liberty.

These two speeches of the Northern and the Southern statesman are the complements of each other. They describe the same spectacle from different points of view. At Detroit, Mr. Seward shows us how the nation, like Gulliver, is bound down to the ground by each separate single hair. Mr. Stephens, at Augusta, does not tell us that the Gulliver is *bound*, indeed, for there is a choice in phrases; he touches him with his foot as a sultan touches a prostrate slave, smilingly, and says, "See how still he lies; he doesn't move in the least."

Mr. Stephens bade his friends good-night and laid himself to repose upon the bed of private life. But suddenly he heard the fiery apostle Toombs exclaim to the Georgia Legislature at Milledgeville, "I ask you to give me the sword; for if you do not give it to me, as God lives I will take it myself."

"Stop, stop," cried Mr. Stephens, starting up. "Is the Southern Policy, safe from its enemies, now to be endangered by its friends? The Union has always been our tool with which we have shaped our prosperity. With the threat of disunion we have always scourged the North into submission. Don't fling it away because for the moment it is a little loose in the handle. Wait for four years. We have the House, we have the

Senate, we have the blessing of the Supreme Court; our revolution can be peacefully accomplished, slavery will become the corner-stone of the Union, the Southern Policy be permanently established, and the perturbed spirit of Calhoun have rest."

This was Mr. Stephens's celebrated "Union" speech —which has very unjustly earned him a double share of infamy, as if he had weakly yielded to crime with his eyes open. But if he had the least taint of fidelity to the Union—except as the tool of the South—do you suppose he would have been made second to Mr. Davis in the hour of trial? Would the Southern leaders ever have made Joseph Holt or Andrew Johnson Vice-President of their Confederation? No, no. They are men who understand their game. They knew what they were doing when they made Pierce and Buchanan Presidents of the United States—nor less so when, in their rebellion, they placed Stephens by the side of Davis. It was only a question of method between Mr. Stephens and the other leaders. They all believed that the country was so morally rotten that it would consent to the most fundamental change in the government, though it were solely for the benefit of human slavery. Mr. Slidell, Mr. Mason, and Mr. Hunter privately said in Washington that the change would be peaceably effected. Mr. Toombs, with gay fierceness, said that he would agree to drink all the blood that was shed in the war. "If then you are so sure that the country is ripe, why draw the sword?" asked Mr. Stephens. Merely to show the blade and precipitate the result by terror, was the reply.

For these men were sure all signs showed that the great work of Calhoun was accomplished and that of Washington undone; that to avoid war the country would accept any alternative however shameful—and that was the turning-point of our history. The degradation which the Holy Alliance prepared for Europe after the Treaty of Vienna was not so fearful as that which the Southern Policy had prepared and was effecting for this country. And that also proceeded by an alliance. As the ferocious King of Naples, in 1848, made the lazzaroni his allies, appealing to every mean prejudice and passion of ignorant men, so the Planting aristocracy of the South allied itself with ignorance, with hatred of race, with class jealousy, with the morbid timidity of trade, in order to secure its ascendency. Aristocratic in instinct, by necessity, in theory and practice, the Southern Policy adopted the name of Democracy, the better to annihilate Democratic principles, and down to 1860 had succeeded in identifying that name with all that was most anti-American in theory, most inhuman and degrading in practice. If, in the interest of that policy, the right of speech were to be assailed, if the sanctity of the ballot-box were to be invaded, if a law repugnant to every manly instinct were to be enforced in blood, if neighboring nations were to be wronged by banditti and pirates, if foreign powers were to be defied and insulted—if the most shameless violations of the Constitution were to be justified and supported, if elections were to be carried under threat of war—it was always the Southern Policy and its ministers at the North who stood ready stripped for the work, and did it in the

name of the Democracy. It was Sheridan's joke made terrible. "What is your name?" said the watchman to Sheridan, when they found him at midnight drunk in the gutter. "William Wilberforce," the wag thickly responded. "Who are you," cried the indignant heart of man, "that outrage human nature and destroy the hope of equal liberty?" "The American Democracy," was the exquisitely satirical reply. And as the Southern Policy, being of necessity aristocratic, used the word democracy to bring popular government into contempt, so its leaders, being disunionists and fanatics of State sovereignty, professed a maudlin respect for the Union, and being of all Americans sectional, insisted upon calling themselves national. So when they wished at one blow to uproot the democratic principle, dissolve the Union, and ruin the nation, they took care to call themselves National Union Democrats. And so far had this demoralization gone that if you found a man—and there were many such—who really thought our system a failure, who hated the very name of progress, who believed the doctrine of equal rights to be a mere gull for the mob, who heartily despised the people, and secretly preferred a monarchy, you might be very sure that you had found a man who regularly voted the Democratic ticket.

Thank God, the war has rubbed out party lines. In the holy name of democracy, or the self-government of the people, let this shameful forgery be exposed! Let us not endure that any body of men, who in theory and practice trample upon the original rights of man, shall be called the American Democracy, until we are

ready to grant that those who crucified Christ were justly called Christians.

The winter of 1860–61 was the turning-point of our history. Just think what Calhoun had done! In 1833 every State but his own frowned upon him. In 1860 he had made it doubtful whether a shot would be fired to save the nation. In New York, at a private meeting of capitalists and politicians, one of the present representatives of that city gravely proposed that the terms of the Southern leaders should be accepted in advance, before they were known, and one of the largest merchants in the city cried eagerly "Amen." But another of the company, one of the richest men in the country, said simply: "I will do anything honorable to keep the peace. The South owes me at least a million of dollars; but should it raise its hand against the Union, I will gladly lose that million and every other dollar I have in the world to maintain the government."

But, noble as his words were, they did not at that time speak for the city of New York. Fernando Wood and the *Herald* were the truer spokesmen of the confused public sentiment when one proposed the secession of the city, and the other the adoption of the Montgomery Constitution. If the city of New York in February, 1861, had voted upon its acceptance, it would have been adopted. She would have bolted it, horns and all, as a boa-constrictor swallows an ox.

Europe sent her shrewdest correspondent to describe the signs of the times in this country. He was not a philosopher, but he was a sharp observer. He landed in New York, and saw much of men of public and pri-

vate distinction. In seeing them he had a right to believe that he saw a fair representation of the public sentiment of substantial America in regard to the situation, and what did he find? Why, in soft drawing-rooms, where pretty ladies lisped disdain of the horrid, vulgar rail-splitter, and where afterwards a British nobleman was allowed to wear a rebel badge unrebuked by the host, the correspondent declares that he found almost all men of position holding the same dilettante tone, doubting if the government had the right to coerce—in other words, to enforce its laws—and, in general, as little anxious for the future or excited by the present as a party of *savans* chronicling the movement of a magnetic storm.

Do you say that he knew nothing of the character and resolution of the American people? True. Nor did we. We were all sliding swiftly along, conscious of standing on a crust, and no man could say at that moment whether brittle as glass it would shiver at the next step and plunge us all into anarchy, or whether—as, God be thanked, it has proved—it were firm and enduring as adamant.

There is no more pitiful picture in history of a society lost to all emotion of patriotism and to all regard of the sanctity of law, indicating the last point of national decay, than that which Russell paints of the city of New York on the eve of this great war. For what reason had any one to suppose that the men who in the summer of 1860 gave thousands of dollars to secure the political success of men who declared plainly that if they did not succeed they would destroy the government,

would in the spring of 1861 give thousands of dollars to punish the same men for keeping their word?

No wonder that as Europe heard and saw what we did it believed as Stephens and Toombs and Mason and Hunter believed, that we were too hopelessly corrupt to try to save ourselves. No wonder that it believed the issue to be a foregone conclusion; that even if the new administration should try fighting, it was too late; and that, seeing one section practically united and ardent, and the other gloomy, silent, and paralyzed, it hastened to save the future by declaring equal belligerent rights. Was it unfriendly to do it? But who were we that made the complaint? Scarcely six years before, our ministers to the chief western powers of Europe met in the capital of one of them to plot the forcible dismemberment of another. When the ill-starred plotters came home, we made the first conspirator our chief magistrate. We do not think England's attitude friendly. It certainly is not. We do not think Louis Napoleon's conquest of Mexico friendly. It is not. It is hostile. But what do we think of the Ostend Conference? Who taught Europe to be unfriendly? When we made a man who plotted piracy our President, we invited the civilized world to treat us as outlaws. And no wonder—when we, who, with the arrogance of plantation overseers, had assumed in time of peace to divide foreign kingdoms, in their own capitals, were unable or unwilling to avenge a mortal insult to our own flag in our own waters upon the *Star of the West*—that the scorn and jealousy and hate of aristocratic and commercial Europe burst from the sordid lips of the London

Times in those contemptuous words: "The United States have been a vast burlesque upon the functions of national existence, and it was Mr. Russell's fate to behold their transformation scene, and to see the first tumbles of their clowns and pantaloons." It makes a man's blood boil and his cheek burn to think such words were ever spoken of us. But should it not make the blood freeze and the cheek blanch to think they could ever be *truly* spoken of us? And yet when President, secretaries, senators, governors, bound by solemn oaths, receiving public payment, were secretly leagued to forswear themselves, to defy civilization, and outrage human nature, and when the public opinion of the country actually seemed to doubt whether the government had a right to defend its life, then the stinging and scornful words are justified before God and history, that the government of the United States, administered by such men and to such ends, *was* a vast burlesque upon the functions of national existence. So near have we been brought to destruction. Our feet had slipped to the very brink of the pit and were scorched with the fire. What had brought them there? Was it anything else than the political demoralization wrought by the Southern Policy, which by the necessity of its character is hostile to American principles and a free government? You thought it might seduce a few of the ignorant, but that the intelligent were proof against its seductions. But, my friends, the last few weeks have given us another melancholy illustration of the corroding influence of the Southern Policy upon fidelity to the fundamental principles of the American government, and an

illustration whose moral does not end with an election. A polished and accomplished gentleman of another State, fortunate in many ways, addicted to public life, and a proper subject of public criticism, lately broke the long political silence in which his fellow-citizens of this State had fully acquiesced, and, renouncing his early training in the school of Daniel Webster, came all the way to New York to surrender to the ghost of John C. Calhoun. Standing between a bully and a swindler, that the sad sacrifice might be complete and conspicuous and lack no accessory of shame, this gentleman deliberately said, "We cannot fail to remember that it was the sectional Republican party four years ago who furnished the immediate occasion for that atrocious and ungodly assault upon the Constitution and government which inaugurated this civil war."

Does a Constitutional election furnish an occasion for atrocious rebellion except to the basest traitors? What had this party done which Mr. Robert C. Winthrop holds virtually guilty of the act? It had done what Daniel Webster, Mr. Winthrop's political teacher, with all the chief men of Boston, did on the 3d of December, 1819. It had declared that slavery ought not to be extended, and that Congress ought to exercise its constitutional power of preserving the national territory from its fatal touch. This question it had fairly debated before the people of the United States, in good faith and without a threat. Upon this question it went into an election by whose result, favorable or adverse, it meant to abide. Upon this question, fairly debated, a President was constitutionally elected. A party of his

opponents rushed to arms, fired upon the flag, and have sought from that day to overthrow the government. "And you are guilty," says Mr. Winthrop to the Constitutional majority of the American people, "because you insisted upon discussing slavery after Mr. Calhoun and his followers had told you to stop." So thoroughly is his political faith as an American citizen undermined, so entirely is he subjugated by the sophistry of the Southern Policy, that this polished and accomplished gentleman virtually says that, if any party in this country threatens to ruin the government unless it can rule it, those who vote against that party are guilty of the consequences. Now, there was a party which said this four years ago at Charleston. It was defeated, and it is keeping its word. It has murdered your best and dearest. "Very well, why did you furnish the occasion? Your children's blood is upon your own heads," says Mr. Robert C. Winthrop. I am not questioning his perfect sincerity. I am saying nothing *of* him that I would not frankly say *to* him. But here is a gentleman who declared that those who have merely exercised the right of free discussion have furnished an occasion for bloody rebellion; and he says it, not to condemn the conduct of those who rebelled, but of those who discussed; and the more intelligent he is, the more sincere he is, the more ghastly is the proof that it is not the impracticability of popular principles, but the infidelity to them of educated men, which has plunged the country into war. How true it is what Theodore Parker wrote to me eight years ago, "If our educated men had done their duty, we should not now be in the ghastly condition we be-

wail." Young men of Massachusetts, young men of New England, two Winthrops appeal to you in this hour of national peril, both intelligent, refined, accomplished. The one living, supported by Fernando Wood and Isaiah Rynders, cheered by Jefferson Davis and every rebel, by the London *Times* and the men who built and sailed and fought the *Alabama*, by every enemy of the American government and principle in the world—it is Robert C. Winthrop, who follows John C. Calhoun, and bids you follow him. The other dead, fallen in the first fierce battle of the war to maintain the government, dead in his beautiful youth, full of hope, full of faith, full of fidelity to the American principle and the American people, beckoning to you as he beckoned to his brave boys in the very moment when he fell forward into death and glory—it is Theodore Winthrop, who follows liberty and the Union, and whispers to you, "Follow me, follow me."

Has not this chapter of history answered our question? Are we at war because our government is founded upon impracticable principles, or because we have been false to them? If we had sincerely believed in the equality of human rights, which is the root of our whole political system, we should have insisted upon perfectly free speech, and then the Southern Policy could never have demoralized public opinion. But we have not believed it. We have sold our birthright for a mess of cotton. We have surrendered the right of free discussion. It was annihilated before our eyes throughout half the country, in a time of profound peace; it was coerced in the other half—and we submitted. "I know

not how," said Burke, "to draw an indictment against a whole people." But we have drawn it against ourselves. We betrayed our own principles, and those who would not betray them we reviled as fanatics and traitors. We made the word abolitionist more odious than any in our annals, and yet no man can be, politically speaking, an American, that is, he cannot heartily believe in the principles of the American government, without being of necessity an abolitionist. And history will hereafter recognize these men as the body-guard of the American principle, not only because they asserted, according to the Declaration of Independence, the right of every innocent man to personal liberty, but because in the fiery furnace of popular wrath they maintained, according to the laws of the United States, the right of free speech. They were fanatics—of course they were; so is Grant, fanatically boring at the heart of the Rebellion; so is Sherman, fanatically pushing towards salt water; so is Farragut, fanatically lashed into the maintop, above the fiery storm of death which he directs; so is every man who is vowed by the whole force of his nature to succeed. The two most illustrious fanatics in our history were John C. Calhoun and old John Brown. They represented the inevitable tendencies of American civilization. One died in his bed, honored and deplored as a great statesman. The other was hung upon a gallows, derided as a fanatic. The statesman struggles with his last strength to keep millions of human beings degraded. The felon stoops beneath the gallows, and, tenderly lifting a child of the degraded race, kisses her in the soft winter sun. Peace! peace! History and

the human heart will judge between them. Both their bodies lie mouldering in the grave; whose soul is marching on? It was the fanaticism of abolitionism that has saved this country from the fanaticism of slavery. It was fire fighting fire. And the fire of Heaven is prevailing over that of hell.

Reconstruct, then, as you will. But we are mad if the blood of the war has not anointed our eyes to see that all reconstruction is vain which leaves any questions too brittle to handle. Whatever in this country, in its normal condition of peace, is too delicate to discuss is too dangerous to tolerate. Any system, any policy, any institution, which may not be debated will overthrow us if we do not overthrow it. The proof is the war. But the war is also the proof that we are not yet overthrown, and the election is the proof of certain victory. That we have been able to endure such a strain directly along the fibre as that of the war and the election is due to the general intelligence of the people and to the security of perfectly free discussion. Let that henceforth be maintained and jealously defended by all parties in the land, North, South, East, and West, at every county cross-road and in every city and State, and the Union and government are forever secure. Already baffled and doomed, the helpless spectre of Calhoun fades and dies in the rosy splendor of the dawning day. O eyes that weep! O hearts that break! Not in vain they fell who have saved their country. The young Hercules strangled the serpents in his cradle. The young America, with the dew of her baptism of liberty still moist upon her brow, will lay with one

hand the serpent of rebellion and with the other the hydra of foreign hate dead beside her cradle. To the American Republic belongs the national domain. To the American heart belongs the national principles of Liberty and Union. To the American flag belongs the national victory which shall secure those principles from sea to sea.

VI

THE GOOD FIGHT

1865–6

This lecture was written in the autumn of 1865, and delivered in many places during that season and the following winter.

The Civil War had ended. Andrew Johnson was President. Slavery had been abolished by the Constitutional Amendment, and the process of "Reconstruction" was actively proceeding.

THE GOOD FIGHT

It is a wise old saw that warns us not to whistle until we are out of the woods. But, as we climb the Alps and, emerging from the morass and forest, see once more the sun and the broad landscape, we may fairly shout and sing, although we are still toiling on, and are yet far below the pure peaks towards which we go. In our Revolution, a man who saw distinctly, as we can now see, that the triumph of Great Britain would have imperilled constitutional liberty everywhere, surely had a right to rejoice over the victory of Saratoga, though it was not the end of the war. The battle did not end the war, indeed. The Tories sneered and bade the Yankees wait. They did wait. They waited from Burgoyne's surrender at Saratoga to Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown. Yankee pluck, as usual, waited until it won, as in later days it waited from Bull Run to Richmond. The battle of Saratoga was a skirmish compared with our later battles, but it was a fatal blow to Tory supremacy upon this continent. It was a gleam of sunshine in which it was right to shout and sing, for it was another great gain in the Good Fight of Man.

Human history is the story of that Good Fight, of the effort of man to attain that universal liberty to which he feels himself born. All wars are but battles in this war. It is fought by the tongue and pen as earnestly as with the sword and shell. It is called by various names. The combatants rally under various banners. Whatever in human nature is hopeful, generous, aspiring—the love of God and trust in man—is arrayed on one side. The meaner passions, the baser purpose, stand upon the other.

But the two sides are always plainly apparent in every form of the struggle, and every man inevitably shows his colors. We are all Butternuts or Bluecoats. A modern Protestant clergyman, for instance, who boils down his Bible to distil from it the one black drop of slavery, and who excuses the most horrible crimes by the sending back of Onesimus and the cursing of Ham, joins hands with the Romish Grand Inquisitor Torquemada, and burns human freedom at the stake. The scientific scholar, who from the formation of Tom's shin-bone proves that Dick may whip Tom's wife and sell his children, fights in the ranks with the cruel skill that used the thumb-screw and the boots to frighten the mind from freedom. And an American convention which solemnly resolves, with one in Pennsylvania lately, that to confer the right of suffrage upon any person but a white man is a crime against the Constitution and a degradation of the white race, helps Philip II. of Spain to crush the Netherlands, fights with the redcoats at Saratoga, tears the Declaration of Independence, and fires at the flag

of the United States a more shameful shot than that at Sumter.

And, on the other hand, the Greek Leonidas choking the pass against the Persian torrent, the Italian Galileo holding fast his scientific faith in the teeth of the Church of Rome, Robert Small steering his bold boat under the guns of slavery straight towards the flag of freedom, Abraham Lincoln patiently saving civil liberty, are all, in their times and countries, soldiers of the true cross, heroes and martyrs of the Good Fight.

The part assigned to this country in the Good Fight of Man is the total overthrow of the spirit of caste. Luther fought it in the form of ecclesiastical despotism; our fathers fought it as political tyranny; we have hitherto encountered it intrenched in a system of personal slavery. But in all these forms it is the same old spirit of the denial of equal rights. Martin Luther, the monk, had exactly the same right to his religious faith that Giovanni de' Medici, the pope, had to his. Galileo had the same right to hold and teach his scientific theories that the Church doctors had to teach theirs. Patrick Henry, a British subject, had the same right to refuse to be taxed without representation that Lord North, another British subject, had. Robert Small, one of the American people, had exactly the same right to vote upon the same qualifications with other citizens that the President has or the Chief Justice of the United States. The Inquisition in Italy, aristocratic privilege in England, chattel slavery or unfair political exclusion in the United States, are only

fruits ripened upon the tree of caste. Our swords have cut off some of the fruit, but the tree and its roots remain, and now that our swords are turned into ploughshares and our Dahlgrens and Parrotts into axes and hoes, our business is to take care that the tree and all its roots are thoroughly cut down and dug up, and burned utterly away in the great blaze of equal rights.

There is no *gentleman* in America but he who feels that every man is his equal in natural right, and who does not know that *he* is cheated if every man does not have fair play.

In January, 1865, Louis Wigfall, one of the rebel chiefs, said, in Richmond, "Sir, I wish to live in no country where the man who blacks my boots or curries my horse is my equal." Three months afterwards, when the rebel was skulking away to Mexico, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, walked through the streets of Richmond and respectfully lifted his hat to the men who blacked Louis Wigfall's boots and curried his horse. What did it mean? It meant that the truest American President we have ever had—the companion of Washington in our love and honor—recognized that the poorest man, however outraged, however ignorant, however despised, however black, was, as a man, his equal. The child of the American people was their most prophetic man, because, whether as small shop-keeper, as flat-boatman, as volunteer captain, as honest lawyer, as defender of the Declaration, as President of the United States, he knew by the profoundest instinct and the widest experience and reflection, that in the most vital faith of this country it is just as

honorable for an honest man to curry a horse and black a boot as it is to raise cotton or corn, to sell molasses or cloth, to practice medicine or law, to gamble in stocks or speculate in petroleum. He knew the European doctrine that the king makes the gentleman; but he *believed* with his whole soul the doctrine, the American doctrine, that worth makes the man. He stood with his hand on the helm, and saw the rebel colors of caste flying in the storm of war. He heard the haughty shout of rebellion to the American principle rising above the gale, "Capital ought to own labor and the laborer, and a few men should monopolize political power." He heard the cracked and quavering voice of mediæval Europe in which that rebel craft was equipped and launched, speaking by the tongue of Alexander Stephens, "We build on the corner-stone of slavery." Then calmly waiting until the wildest fury of the gale, the living America, which is our country, mistress of our souls, by the lips of Abraham Lincoln thundered jubilantly back to the dead Europe of the past, "And we build upon fair play for every man, equality before the laws, and God for us all."

It is not yet the Millennium. We have not yet reached these pure heights of civilization, the ascent to which is the Good Fight. But are we no nearer the summit because we do not stand upon it? Has the Good Fight gained nothing by the war? If you sail from Boston to Calcutta, when you are off Madagascar you are not yet in India, but you have rounded the Cape of Good Hope—you are not yet in India, but at least you are outside Boston Light. I do not say the

country is yet beyond Boston Light, but if not, it is only because Boston Light is the sun of liberty that shines all over the world.

There was a time indeed when it was not so, when the bold mariner, Roger Williams, sailed *beyond* the Boston Light of two centuries ago, and asked of the wilds of the Seekonk and the Mawshawsuc, "What cheer? What cheer?" And the friendly solitudes answered, "A truer liberty than you left behind." And if Boston Light cheers the world to-day it is because the *spirit* of Roger Williams feeds the flame.

What is our reckoning, then? How far are we towards Cathay? What advantages has the Good Fight of Man gained in the war?

We have shown, first, that a popular government, under which the poorest and the most ignorant of every race but one are equal voters with the richest and most intelligent, is the most powerful and flexible in history. It is proved to be neither violent nor cruel nor impatient, but fixed in purpose, faithful to its own officers, tolerant of vast expense, of enormous losses, of torturing delays, and strongest at the very points where fatal weakness was most suspected. "If you put a million of men under arms you will inevitably end in a military despotism," said Europe. "The reabsorption of an army is the most perilous problem of any nation." And within six months of the surrender of Lee an English gentleman, Sir Morton Peto, found himself in a huge business office in Chicago, surrounded by scores of clerks quietly engaged with merchandise and ledgers. "Did you go on so during the war?" he asked. "Oh, no,

Sir Morton. That young man was a corporal, that was a lieutenant, that was a major, that was a colonel. Twenty-seven of us were officers in the army." "I-n-d-e-e-d!" said the English gentleman. And all Europe, looking across the sea at the same spectacle, magnified by hundreds of thousands, of citizens quietly re-engaged in their various pursuits, echoes the astonished exclamation, "I-n-d-e-e-d!" for it sees that a million of men were in arms for the very purpose of returning to their offices and warehouses to sell their merchandise and post their ledgers in tranquillity. Yes, the great army that for four years shook this continent was only the Yankee constable going his rounds.

European Toryism has long regarded us as a vulgar young giant sprawling and spitting over a continent, whose limbs were indeed too loose and ungainly to be very effective, but who might yet one day make trouble and require to be thrashed into decency and order. When Horace Greeley was in Paris, he was one morning looking with an American friend at the pictures in the gallery of the Louvre and talking of this country. "The fact is," said Mr. Greeley, "that what we need is a darned good licking." An Englishman who stood by and heard the conversation smiled eagerly, as if he knew a nation that would like to administer the castigation. "Yes, sir," said he, complacently, rubbing his hands with appetite and joining in the conversation, "that is just what you do want." "But the difficulty is," continued Mr. Greeley to his friend as if he had heard nothing, "the difficulty is that there's no nation in the world that can lick us." It was true — so we turned to and

licked ourselves. And it seems to me that a young giant who for the sake of order and humanity scourges himself at home, is not very likely wantonly to insult and outrage his neighbors. Indeed, measured by his neighbors who go marauding in India or China or Mexico, and through whose slippery neutral fingers a dozen privateers escape to sweep his commerce from the sea, he is an orderly and honorable citizen of the world. The British Tory mind did not believe that any popular government could subdue so formidable a rebellion. Mr. Gladstone is not a Tory, but even he said, "Great Britain could not do it, sir," and what Great Britain could not do he did not believe could be done. Perhaps he would have thought differently could he have heard what a friend of mine did when the Massachusetts Sixth Regiment passed through New York on its way to Washington. It was the first sign of war that New York had seen, and as Broadway stared gloomily at the soldiers steadily marching, my friend stepped into the street and, walking by the side of one of the ranks, asked the soldier nearest him from what part of the State he came. The soldier, solely intent upon stepping in time, made his reply in measure with the drum-beat, "From Bunk-er Hill; from Bunk-er Hill; from Bunk-er Hill."

Mr. Gladstone is an Englishman and a scholar. Had he walked by the side of that soldier, remembering Cromwell's Ironsides who trusted in God and kept their powder dry, and the old Continental militia, I think he would not have declared as he did that "Jefferson Davis had created a nation," but he would rather have

said: "If Bunker Hill sends the first soldiers to this war, it is already decided. My lords and gentlemen, John Bull had better touch no American bonds which Bunker Hill does not endorse."

But the indication of the strength of our system was moral as well as physical. "You cannot stand the strain of a civil war and of party spirit combined," said the sceptics. "You will end in anarchy at the election."* I knew those who apprehended revolution and provisional governments as November approached. In hushed expectation election day dawned. You remember the old story of an agreement of everybody in the world to shout all together at the same moment upon a certain day, and make a noise that would be heard to the stars. The hour came—and it was the most silent moment ever known. The sole sound was the thin, weak cry of one deaf old woman. Everybody else in the world was listening for the prodigious noise. So the Great Election passed in perfect peace. The sun of the ninth of November rose, not upon a convulsed nation tumbling into anarchy, but standing calm, strong, and erect upon its two feet of Union and Liberty—and somewhere upon the ground the tip-end of the tail of a copperhead snake sneaking into his hole.

The war has revealed an overpowering national instinct. The conflicting theories of the exact nature and limitations of our government had blinded the shrewdest minds to the fact that we were a nation, with all the feelings and instincts of a nation, and that

* The election of November, 1864—the re-election of Lincoln.

our quarrels must be settled inside and not outside of the Union.

Mr. Toombs was willing to dissolve the Union to save slavery, Mr. Phillips, to save liberty; while Mr. Seward, denounced and derided by both, declared that the deepest instinct of the American people was for union. Reserved rights, State rights, limited powers, the advantages of union and disunion, were the cucumbers from which we were busily engaged in distilling light, overlooking the fact of nationality in discussing the conditions of union. We were speculating upon costume. We gravely proved that the clothes were the clothes of a woman, or of a child, without seeing that whatever the clothes might be there was a full-grown man inside of them. "The Constitution is a contract between sovereign States," shouted Mr. Toombs; "let Georgia tear it and separate." "The Constitution is a league with hell," calmly replied Mr. Phillips; "let New York cut off New Orleans to rot alone." "Oh, dear! it's a dreadful dilemma," whimpered President Buchanan. "States have no right to secede, and the United States have no right to coerce. Oh, dear me! it's perfectly awful! I'm the most patriotic of men—but what shall I do? what shall I do?" Separate! Cut off! Secede! It was of a living body they spoke, which, pierced anywhere, quivered everywhere.

Our national unity was the secret of the force of each of the members. New York could not be New York nor Ohio be Ohio without Massachusetts and without Georgia. And a government which had not the right to coerce had not the right to exist.

A few years after the Constitution was adopted Alexander Hamilton said to Josiah Quincy that he thought the Union might endure for thirty years. He feared the centrifugal force of the system. The danger, he said, would proceed from the States, not from the national government. But Hamilton seems not to have considered that the vital necessity which had always united the colonies from the first New England league against the Indians, and which, in his own time, forced the people of the country from the sands of a confederacy to the rock of union, would become stronger every year and inevitably develop and confirm a nation. Whatever the intention of the fathers in 1787 might have been, whether a league or confederacy or treaty, the conclusion of the children in 1860 might have been predicted. Plant a homogeneous people along the coast of a virgin continent. Let them gradually overspread it to the farther sea, speaking the same language, virtually of the same religious faith, intermarrying, and cherishing common heroic traditions. Suppose them sweeping from end to end of their vast domain without passports—the physical perils of their increasing extent constantly modified by science, steam, and the telegraph, making Maine and Oregon neighbors — their trade enormous, their prosperity a miracle, their commonwealth of unsurpassed importance in the world, and you may theorize as you will, but you have supposed an imperial nation, which may indeed be a power of evil as well as of good, but which can no more recede into its original elements and local sources than its own Mississippi, pouring broad and resistless into

the Gulf, can turn backward to the petty forest springs and rills whence it flows. "No, no," murmurs the mighty river; "when you can take the blue out of the sky, when you can steal heat from fire, when you can strip splendor from the morning, then, and not before, may you reclaim your separate drops in me." "Yes, yes, my river," answers the Union, "you speak for me. I am no more a child, but a man; no longer a confederacy, but a nation. I am no more Virginia, New York, Carolina, or Massachusetts, but the United States of America."

The foreboding statesman who knew how Greece had fallen asunder and perished, who knew the mean tenure of European leagues, who knew the absolute necessity of union and the jarring jealousies of sections, saw in the Constitution but a shadowy bond which foretold early separation and disaster. It was not strange when the Union was scarcely ten years old — still in the gristle — he heard the serpent of State sovereignty angrily hissing in the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of '98.

Hamilton doubted the cohesive force of the Constitution to make a nation. He was so far right, for no constitution can make a nation. That is a growth, and the vigor and intensity of our national growth transcended our own suspicions. It was typified by our material progress. General Hamilton died in 1804. In 1812, during the last war with England, the largest gun used was a thirty-six pounder. In the war just ended it was a two-thousand pounder. The largest *gun* then weighed two thousand pounds. The largest *shot* now

weighs two thousand pounds. Twenty years after Hamilton died the traveller toiled painfully from the Hudson to Niagara on canal-boats and in wagons, and thence on horseback to Kentucky. Now he whirls from the Hudson to the Mississippi upon thousands of miles of various railroads, the profits of which would pay the interest of the national debt. So by a myriad influences, as subtle as the forces of the air and earth about a growing tree, has our nationality grown and strengthened, striking its roots to the centre and defying the tempest. Could the musing statesman who feared that Virginia or New York or Carolina or Massachusetts might rend the Union have heard the voice of sixty years later, it would have said to him: "The babe you held in your arms has grown to be a man, who walks and runs and leaps and works and defends himself. I am no more a vapor, I am condensed. I am no more a germ, I am a life. I am no more a confederation, I am a nation."

Carolina or Virginia may try to break away. In the effort it may destroy its local government as it has now destroyed it; except by successful revolution no rebellious State can escape the jurisdiction, and it will be reorganized exclusively by the national authority of the United States of America. This is what Gettysburg roars and Vicksburg and Port Royal. This is the thunder of the *Kearsarge* as she sinks the *Alabama*. This is the song of Sherman's march to the sea; and Lee's surrender, the fall of Richmond, and the universal crash of the Rebellion mutter and murmur their reluctant "Amen, Amen."

But, at the same moment that the profound sense of

nationality and the power of the nation are revealed, the national mind has gained a clear perception of the relation of morals and politics—the strict dependence of civil order and national prosperity upon morality.

The relation between physical sanitary laws and the national welfare is now hardly disputed. At this moment the cholera is stealthily feeling its terrible way along the edges of Europe to this country, and there is not an intelligent man who does not know that it is a divine vengeance upon uncleanliness. Let it seize the unclean city of New York, and it will riot in horror and devastation. Panic will empty the palaces—trade will stop in the warehouses. Those who can will flee, while the poor and wretched, poisoned in tenement-houses, will be huddled in heaps of agony and death. Does any man say that cholera is God's remedy for over-population? On the contrary, it is only the ghastly proof that God's laws of human health are disregarded. It is not a proclamation that the world is overpeopled; it is merely a warning for the world to provide decently for its population. God does not create men in his image to rot in tenement-houses, and he will make squalor and filth and misery plague-spots threatening the fairest prosperity, until that prosperity acknowledges in vast sanitary reforms that cleanliness is next to godliness. And if the dread pestilence now approaching our shores would frighten us into universal purgation of our foul cities, it would be seen at this moment hovering in the wintry air, not an angry demon, but a stern angel with a sword of fire to open the path of knowledge and humanity and civilization.

And are there no laws of moral health? Can they be outraged and the penalty not paid? Let a man turn out of the bright and bustling Broadway, out of the mad revel of riches and the restless, unripe luxury of ignorant men whom sudden wealth has disordered like exhilarating gas; let him penetrate through sickening stench the lairs of typhus, the dens of small-pox, the coverts of all loathsome disease and unimaginable crimes; let him see the dull, starved, stolid, lowering faces, the human heaps of utter woe, and, like Jefferson in contemplating slavery a hundred years ago in Virginia, he will murmur with bowed head, "I tremble for this city when I remember that God is just." Is his justice any surer in a tenement-house than it is in a State? Filth in the city is pestilence. Injustice in the State is civil war. "Gentlemen," said George Mason, a friend and neighbor of Jefferson's, in the Convention that framed the Constitution, "by an inscrutable chain of causes and effects Providence punishes national sins by national calamities." "Oh no gentlemen, it is no such thing," replied John Rutledge of South Carolina. "Religion and humanity have nothing to do with this question. Interest is the governing principle with nations." The descendants of John Rutledge live in the State which quivers still with the terrible tread of Sherman and his men. Let them answer! O seaports and factories, silent and ruined! O barns and granaries, heaps of blackened desolation! O wasted homes, bleeding hearts, starving mouths! O land consumed in the fire your own hands kindled! Was not John Rutledge wrong, was not George Mason right, that prosperity which is

only money in the purse, and not justice or fair play, is the most cruel traitor, and will cheat you of your heart's blood in the end?

"Don't be visionary," shouted trade and the spiritual blindness which is absurdly called practical common-sense; "morals have nothing to do with politics. Don't talk of injustice. In this world we must compromise. Compromise is the very essence of government." So it is, if you do not attempt to compromise moral principle. "All government," says Edmund Burke, "is founded upon compromise and barter. . . . But in all fair dealings the thing bought must bear some proportion to the purchase paid. None will barter away the immediate jewel of the soul." And what is and always has been the immediate jewel of our national soul if it be not the equal rights of men?

Compromise equal rights in the United States! Whittle a crowbar! How do we like it, as the boys say, as far as we have got? You may compromise questions of cotton and corn, but you cannot long compromise a point of conscience. Moral principles are absolute and eternal. You may stretch an inch of india-rubber to cover your hat; you cannot stretch a diamond the shadow of a hair.

We thought we could and we tried it. The breath of our national nostrils was equal rights. The jewel of our soul was fair play for all men. But, selecting one class of our population, we denied to them every natural right and sought to extinguish their very humanity. Resistance was hopeless, but they protested silently by still wearing the *form* of man, of which we could not

deprive them. Planting both feet upon the prostrate and helpless—men as much as we—we politely invited the world to contemplate the prosperity of the United States. Forests falling, factories humming, gold glittering in every man's pocket! Above all, would the world please to take notice that it was a land of liberty, and that we offered a happy home to the oppressed of every clime? "A wise and sensible man was John Rutledge of South Carolina," smiled the complacent country, smoothing its full pockets; "morals have nothing to do with politics." "Good," mutters the ostrich, as he buries his head in the sand; "now nobody sees me."

And suddenly, in a moment smitten by the avenging storm of fire, choking and struggling in the thick clouds and blood of war, for four years we have desperately wrestled for life, and kneeling among the dear and mangled bodies of our first-born and best-beloved, we have acknowledged that even Yankees cannot shake the throne of God, that he *has* created men with equal rights, and that morals and politics, which his right hand has joined together, not the shrewdest head nor the basest heart, nor the most prosperous nation nor the most insolent and popular party, nor sneers nor falsehoods, nor mean men nor wicked laws can put asunder. Ah, fathers, mothers, lovers, whose darlings come no more, you whose sad voices ask, "What have we gained? what have we gained?" how can your aching hearts believe it, but this war of four years, so full of doubt and anguish, was infinitely nobler and more glorious than the thirty years of peace before it. Four years more of such peace would have slain the very soul of the nation;

and because the country was still strong enough to tear off that fair and fatal robe of compromise, because she bared her bosom and bravely endured the sharp torture of the knife, to-day the cancer is cut away, and she stands erect, though bleeding, and thanks God for health renewed.

This, then, is the gain of the Good Fight in this war: first, that the nation has attained a living consciousness of its inevitable unity; second, that it has proved its enormous power; and third, that in the terrible struggle it has used that united power for, and not against, equal rights. And the spirit of caste which it has disabled it will now utterly destroy. For the Good Fight is not a crusade against a section or a State, but against caste everywhere in the country. This is now intrenched in the bitter prejudice against the colored race, which is as inhuman and unmanly as the old hatred and contempt of Christendom for the Jews. Lifting their heads from bloody defeat in the field, the wan and wasted States of the South say in terms caste must be maintained, and by every kind of vagrant law and hostile legislation they will try to maintain it.

But when we freed the slaves we did not say to them, "Caste shall not grind you with the right hand, but it shall with the left." We said, "Caste shall not grind you at all, and you shall have the same guarantees of freedom that we have." President Johnson defines the liberty springing from the Emancipation amendment as the right to labor and enjoy the fruit of labor to its fullest extent. It is easy to quarrel with this as with every definition. But it is good enough, and it

is as true of Connecticut as of Missouri that no man fully enjoys the fruit of his labor who does not have an equality of right before the law and a voice in making the law. That is the final security of the commonwealth, and we are bound to help every citizen attain it, whether it be the foreigner who comes ignorant and wretched to our shores or the native whom a cruel prejudice opposes. Do you tell me that we have nothing to do with the State laws of Alabama? I answer that the people of the United States are the sole and final judges of the measures necessary to the full enjoyment of the freedom which they have anywhere bestowed. If we choose, we may trust a certain class in the unorganized States to secure this liberty, just as we might have chosen to trust Mr. Vallandigham, Mr. Horatio Seymour, and Mr. Fernando Wood to carry on the war. But as we wanted honor and not dishonor, as we wanted victory and not surrender, we chose to trust it to Farragut and Sherman, to Sheridan and Grant. If you *don't* want a thing done, says the old proverb, *send;* if you do, go yourself. When Grant started, Uncle Sam went himself. So, if we don't care whether we keep our word to those whom we have freed, we may *send*, by leaving them to the tender mercies of those who despise and distrust them. But if we *do* care for our own honor and the national welfare, we shall go ourselves, and through a national bureau and voluntary associations of education and aid, or in some better way if it can be devised, keep fast hold of the hands of those whom the President calls our wards, and not relinquish those hands until we

leave in them every guarantee of freedom that we ourselves enjoy.

Mayor Macbeth, of Charleston, told General Howard that he did not believe that a bureau at Washington could manage the social relations of the people from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. But the answer to Mayor Macbeth is that he and his companions have managed those relations at a cost to the country of four years of civil war, three thousand millions of dollars, and hundreds of thousands of lives. The Freedmen's Bureau will hardly be as expensive as that.

And while such a bureau merely defends the rights of a certain class under the laws, the aid societies give them that education which in the present state of local feeling would be inevitably withheld. The mighty march of Sherman, wasting and taming the land, is followed by the noiseless steps of the band of unnamed heroes and heroines who are teaching the people. The soldier drew the furrow, the teacher drops the seed. There is many and many a devoted woman, hidden at this moment in the lowliest cabins of the South, whose name poets will not sing nor historians record, but whose patient toil the eye that marks the sparrow's fall beholds and approves. Not more noble, not more essential, was the work of the bravest and most famous of the heroes who fell in the wild storm of battle, than that of many a woman to us unknown, faithful through privation and exposure and disease, and perishing at the lonely outpost of duty in the act of helping the nation keep its word.

But the spirit of caste, if naturally more malignant

in a region where personal slavery has been abolished against the will of the dominant class, is not confined to it. We are apt to draw the line geographically, but it will not run so. They may be sad goats on the other side of the line, but we sheep may find an occasional speck in our virtuous wool. "Caste must be maintained," say the governors and legislatures of Mississippi and Louisiana and Alabama and North and South Carolina and Georgia." "Amen," says Connecticut, "that is a political wooden nutmeg for this market." "Amen," says New York, which prefers to pour political power into a foreign white whiskey-skin rather than into a native sound and serviceable vessel of a darker hue. "Amen," says Indiana, which asks her colored children to fight and die for her upon the battle-field, and refuses by her laws to permit the survivors to return to their homes. "Amen," say Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, California, Minnesota, Oregon, Kansas, Ohio, Wisconsin, Missouri, and West Virginia, which forbid an entire class of their citizens to vote upon equal qualifications with others. And why? Because the party of hostility to human rights, which is "conservative" in this growing, aspiring, expanding country, exactly as sheet-iron swaddling-clothes are conservative of a new-born babe, pursued by the pitiless logic of the sublime American principle and driven from one absurdity to another, now claims that ours is "a white man's government."

Oh no! Gentlemen, you may wish to make it so, but it was not made so. The false history of Judge Taney

was promptly corrected from Judge Taney's bench by Justice Curtis.

Government of the United States was made by men of all races and all colors, not for white men, but for the refuge and defence of *man*. If it does not rest upon the natural rights of man it rests nowhere. If it does not exist by the consent of the governed then any exclusion is possible, and it is a shorter step from an exclusive white man's government to an exclusively *rich* white man's government, than it is from a system for mankind to one for white men. The spirit which excludes some men to-day because they are of a certain color, may exclude others to-morrow because they are of a certain poverty or a certain church or a certain birthplace. There is no safety, no guarantee, no security in a prejudice. If we would build strong and long, we must build upon moral principle. A white man's government! Not a government of intelligence, of justice, of virtue; not a government by the consent of the governed, but a government of complexion, where reason is skin-deep! Who is a white man? Is a Spaniard? Is a Creole? Is an octoroon? Ohio says that a blood mixture of half-and-half will do for her. But if you have a qualification for the enjoyment of equal rights which vast numbers of our population cannot by nature satisfy, it is as if you made it depend upon a man's height or the color of his hair. You ask us to prefer a system of accidents to one of principles. You ask us to agree that a worthless, idle, drunken rascal, whose face might possibly be white if it could ever be washed clean

enough, may be more safely trusted with political power than an honest, intelligent, sober, industrious colored citizen.

A white man's government! Well, I am a white man, I believe. Will anybody undertake to teach *me* what are the antipathies and loathings of white men? What *mean* whites may or may not like is of small importance. But the generous soul of my race, which has led the van in the great march of liberty and civilization, and whose lofty path is marked by the broken chains of every form of slavery, has an instinctive hatred of injustice, of exclusive privilege, of arrogance, ignorance, and baseness, and an instinctive love of honor, magnanimity, and justice. The white soul of my race naturally loves the man, of whatever race or color, who bravely fights and gloriously dies for equal rights, and instinctively loathes every man who, saved by the blood of such heroes, deems himself made of choicer clay. The spirit of caste asks us to believe the outraged race inferior. Inferior! Inferior in what? In sagacity? In fidelity? In nobility of soul? In the prime qualities of manhood? And who are asked to believe this? *We—we*—hot, panting, exhausted from a fight for our national life in a part of the country where every white face was probably that of an enemy, and every colored face was surely that of a friend. *We* are asked to say it—whose brothers and sons, escaping from horrible pens of torture and death hundreds of miles from our lines, made their way through swamps and forests, safe from hungry bloodhounds and fiercer men, back to our homes and hearts, only because the

men whom in our triumphant fortune we are asked to betray, in our darkest hour of misfortune risked their lives to save ours.

Inferior race! Was it they who carved the skulls of our boys into drinking-cups and their bones into trinkets? Was it they who starved and froze our brothers into idiocy and madness at Andersonville and Belle-Isle? Was it they who hunted our darlings with bloodhounds, or hung faithful Union men before the very eyes of their wives and children? Come! Come! brothers of my race, whether at the North or South—these things which we all execrate and abhor were the work of men of our own color. Let us clasp hands in speechless shame, and confess that manhood in America is to be measured not by the color of the skin, but by the quality of the soul.

I know how subtle, elusive, apparently ineradicable, is the spirit of caste. But I remember that the English lords six centuries ago tore out the teeth of the Jew Isaac of York in the dungeon under the castle; and to-day he lives proudly in the castle, and the same lords come respectfully to his daughter's marriage, while the most brilliant Tory in the British Parliament proposes her health, and the Lord Chief Justice of England leads the hip-hip-hurrah at the wedding breakfast. Caste is very strong, but I remember that five years ago there were good men among us who said, If white hands can't win this fight let it be lost. I have seen the same men agreeing that black hands had even more at stake in it than we, giving them muskets, bidding them Godspeed in the Good Fight, and welcoming them with honor as

they returned. Caste is very strong, but I remember that six years ago there was a Tennessee slave-holder, born in North Carolina, who had always acted with the slave interest, and was then earnestly endeavoring to elect John C. Breckenridge President of the United States. We have all seen that same man four years afterwards, while Tennessee quivered with civil war, standing beneath the autumn stars and saying: "Colored men of Tennessee, humble and unworthy as I am, if no better shall be found I will indeed be your Moses and lead you through the Red Sea of war and bondage to a fairer future of liberty and peace. I speak now as one who feels the world his country and all who love equal rights his friends." So said Andrew Johnson, God and his country listening. God and his country watching, Andrew Johnson will keep his word.

Yes, yes; caste is a glacier, cold, towering, apparently as eternal as the sea itself. But at last that glittering mountain of ice touches the edge of the Gulf Stream. Down come pinnacle and peak, frosty spire and shining cliff. Like a living monster of shifting hues, a huge chameleon of the sea, the vast mass silently rolls and plunges and shrinks, and at last utterly disappears in that inexorable warmth of water. So with us the glacier has touched the Gulf Stream. On Palm Sunday, at Appomattox Court-House, the spirit of feudalism, of aristocracy, of injustice in this country, surrendered, in the person of Robert E. Lee, the Virginian slave-holder, to the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and of equal rights, in the person of Ulysses S. Grant, the Illinois tanner.

So closed this great campaign in the Good Fight of Liberty. So the Army of the Potomac, often baffled, struck an immortal blow, and gave the right hand of heroic fellowship to their brethren of the West. So the silent captain, when all his lieutenants had secured their separate fame, put on the crown of victory and ended civil war.

As fought the Lieutenant-General of the United States, so fight the United States themselves, in the Good Fight of Man. With Grant's tenacity, his patience, his promptness, his tranquil faith, let us assault the new front of the old enemy. We, too, must push through the enemy's Wilderness, holding every point we gain. We, too, must charge at daybreak upon his Spottsylvania Heights. We, too, must flank his angry lines and push them steadily back. We, too, must fling ourselves against the baffling flames of Cold Harbor. We, too, outwitting him by night, must throw our whole force across swamp and river, and stand intrenched before his capital. And we, too, at last, on some soft, auspicious day of spring, loosening all our shining lines, and bursting with wild battle music and universal shout of victory over the last desperate defence, must occupy the very citadel of caste, force the old enemy to final and unconditional surrender, and bring Boston and Charleston to sing Te Deum together for the triumphant equal rights of man.

Never fear, true hearts! A people which has shown the quality of its genius as this nation has in the last four years will finish its work. It will go forward and not backward.

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching.
Cheer up, comrades—they will come!"

For our America shall be the Sinai of the nations, and from the terrible thunders and lightnings of its great struggle shall proceed the divine law of liberty that shall subdue and harmonize the world.

VII

THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

A SPEECH MADE IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, JULY 19, 1867

During the summer of 1867 a Constitutional Convention for the State of New York was held at Albany. Mr. Curtis was a member of it from Richmond County. He took an active part in its deliberations and debates.

THE RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

THE Convention having resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole on the report of the Committee on the Right of Suffrage and the Qualifications to hold Office, Mr. Curtis offered the following amendment:

"In the first section, strike out the word 'male,' and wherever in that section the word 'he' occurs add 'or she,' and wherever the word 'his' occurs add 'or her.'"

Mr. Curtis—In proposing a change so new to our political practice, but so harmonious with the spirit and principles of our government, it is only just that I should attempt to show that it is neither repugnant to reason nor hurtful to the State. Yet I confess some embarrassment, for while the essential reason of my proposition seems to me to be clearly defined, the objection to it is vague and shadowy. From the formal opening of the general discussion of the question in this country, by the Convention at Seneca Falls, in 1848, down to the present moment, the opposition to the suggestion, so far as I am acquainted with it, has been only the repetition of a traditional prejudice or the protest of mere sentimentality, and to cope with these is like wrestling with a malaria or arguing with the east wind. I do not know why the committee

have changed the phrase male inhabitant or citizen, which is uniformly used in a constitutional clause limiting the elective franchise. Under the circumstances, the word "man" is obscure, and undoubtedly includes women as much as the word "mankind." But the intention of the clause is evident, and the report of the committee makes it indisputable. Had the committee been willing to say directly what they say indirectly, the eighth line and what follows would read: "Provided that idiots, lunatics, persons under guardianship, felons, women, and persons convicted of bribery, etc., shall not be entitled to vote." In their report, the committee omit to tell us why they politically class the women of New York with idiots and criminals. They assert merely that the general enfranchisement of women would be a novelty, which is true of every step of political progress, and is therefore a presumption in its favor, and they speak of it in a phrase which is intended to stigmatize it as unwomanly, which is simply an assumption and a prejudice.

I wish to know, sir, and I ask in the name of the political justice and consistency of this State, why it is that half of the adult population, as vitally interested in good government as the other half, who own property, manage estates, and pay taxes, who discharge all the duties of good citizens and are perfectly intelligent and capable, are absolutely deprived of political power, and classed with lunatics and felons. The boy will become a man and a voter; the lunatic may emerge from the cloud and resume his rights; the idiot, plastic under the tender hand of modern science, may be moulded

into the full citizen; the criminal whose hand still drips with the blood of his country and of liberty may be pardoned and restored. But no age, no wisdom, no peculiar fitness, no public service, no effort, no desire can remove from women this enormous and extraordinary disability. Upon what reasonable grounds does it rest? Upon none whatever. It is contrary to natural justice, to the acknowledged and traditional principles of the American government, and to the most enlightened political philosophy.

The absolute exclusion of women from political power in this State is simply usurpation. "In every age and country," says the historian Gibbon, nearly a hundred years ago, "the wiser, or at least the stronger, of the two sexes has usurped the powers of the State and confined the other to the cares and pleasures of domestic life." The historical fact is that the usurping class, as Gibbon calls them, have always regulated the position of women by their own theories and convenience. The barbaric Persian, for instance, punished an insult to the woman with death, not because of her, but of himself. She was part of *him*. And the civilized English Blackstone only repeats the barbaric Persian when he says that the wife and husband form but one person — that is, the husband. Sir, it would be extremely amusing, if it were not tragical, to trace the consequences of this theory on human society, and the unhappy effect upon the progress of civilization of this morbid estimate of the importance of men. Gibbon gives a curious instance of it, and an instance which recalls the spirit of the modern English laws of divorce. There

was a temple in Rome to the goddess who presided over the peace of marriages. "But," says the historian, "her very name Viriplaca—the appeaser of husbands—shows that repentance and submission were always expected from the wife"—as if the offence usually came from her. In the "Lawe's Resolution of Women's Rights," published in the year 1632, a book which I have not seen, but of which there are copies in the country, the anonymous and quaint author says, and with a sly satire: "It is true that man and woman are one person, but understand in what manner. When a small brooke or little river incorporateth with Rhodanus, Humber, or the Thames, the poor rivulet loseth her name; it is carried and recarried with the new associate: it beareth no sway—it possesseth nothing during coverture. A woman as soon as she is married, is called *covert:* in Latine *nupta*—that is, veiled; as it were overclouded and shadowed; she hath lost her streame. I may more truly farre away, say to a married woman, her new self is her superior; her companion her master. . . . See here the reason of that which I touched before—that women have no voice in Parliament; they make no laws; they consent to none; they abrogate none. All of them are understood either married or to be married, and their desires are to their husbands."

From this theory of ancient society that woman is absorbed in man, that she is a social inferior and a subordinate part of man, springs the system of laws in regard to woman which in every civilized country is now in course of such rapid modification, and it is this theory which so tenaciously lingers as a traditional preju-

dice in our political customs. But a State which, like New York, recognizes the equal individual rights of all its members, declaring that none of them shall be disfranchised unless by the law of the land or the judgment of his peers, and which acknowledges women as property-holders and taxable, responsible citizens, has wholly renounced the old feudal and pagan theory, and has no right to continue the evil condition which springs from it. The honorable and eloquent gentleman from Onondaga said that he favored every enlargement of the franchise consistent with the safety of the State. Sir, I heartily agree with him, and it was the duty of the committee, in proposing to continue the exclusion of women, to show that it is necessary to the welfare and safety of the State that the whole sex shall be disfranchised. It is in vain for the committee to say that I ask for an enlargement of the franchise, and must therefore show the reason. Sir, I show the reason upon which this franchise itself rests, and which, in its very nature, forbids arbitrary exclusion; and I urge the enfranchisement of women on the ground that, whatever political rights men have, women have equally. I have no wish to refine curiously upon the origin of government. If any one insists, with the honorable gentleman from Broome, that there are no such things as natural political rights, and that no man is born a voter, I will not now stop to argue with him; but as I believe the honorable gentleman from Broome is by profession a physician and surgeon, I will suggest to him that if no man is born a voter, so no man is born a man — for every man is born a baby. But he

is born with the right of becoming a man without hinderance; and I ask the honorable gentleman, as an American citizen and political philosopher, whether, if every man is not born a voter, he is not born with the right of becoming a voter upon equal terms with other men? What else is the meaning of the phrase which I find in the New York *Tribune* of Monday, and have so often found there, "The radical basis of government is equal rights for all citizens"?

There are, as I think we shall all admit, some kind of natural rights. This summer air that breathes benignant around our national anniversary is vocal with the traditional eloquence with which those rights were asserted by our fathers. From all the burning words of the time I quote those of Alexander Hamilton, of New York, in reply, as my honorable friend the chairman of the committee will remember, to the Tory farmer of Westchester: "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for among old parchments or dusty records. They are written as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature by the hand of the Divinity itself, and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power." In the next year, Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, summed up the political faith of our fathers in the great Declaration. Its words vibrate through the history of those days. As the lyre of Amphion raised the walls of the city, so they are the music which sing course after course of the ascending structure of American civilization into its place. Our fathers stood, indeed, upon technical and legal grounds when the contest with Great Britain began, but as tyranny encroached

they rose naturally into the sphere of fundamental truths as into a purer air. Driven by storms beyond sight of land, the sailor steers by the stars. Our fathers derived their government from what they called self-evident truths. Despite the brilliant and vehement eloquence of Mr. Choate, they did *not* deal in glittering generalities, and the Declaration of Independence was *not* the passionate manifesto of a revolutionary war, but a calm and simple statement of a new political philosophy and practice. The rights which they declared to be unalienable are, indeed, what are usually called natural, as distinguished from political, rights, but they are not limited by sex. A woman has the same right to her life, liberty, and property that a man has, and she has consequently the same right to an equality of protection that he has; and this, as I understand it, is what is meant by the phrase, the right of suffrage. If I have a natural right to this hand, I have an equal natural right to everything that secures to me its use, provided it does not harm the equal right of another; and if I have a natural right to my life and liberty, I have the same right to everything that protects that life and liberty which any other man enjoys. I should like my honorable friend the chairman of this committee to show me any right which God gave him which he also gave to me, for which God gave him a claim to any defence which he has not given to me. And I ask the same question for every woman in this State. Have they less natural right to life, liberty, and property than my honorable friend the chairman of the committee? and is it not, to quote the words of his report, an ex-

tremely "defensible theory" that he cannot justly deprive the least of those women of any protection of those rights which he claims for himself? No, sir, the natural, or what we call civil, right and its political defence go together. This was the impregnable logic of the Revolution. Lord Gower sneered in Parliament at the Colonists a century ago, as Mr. Robert Lowe sneers at the reformers to-day. "Let the Americans talk about their natural and divine rights." "I am for enforcing these measures." Dr. Johnson bellowed across the Atlantic, "Taxation no tyranny." James Otis spoke for America, for common-sense, and for the eternal justice, in saying: "No good reason, however, can be given in any country, why every man of a sound mind should not have his vote in the election of a representative. If a man has had but little property to protect and defend, yet his life and liberty are things of some importance." And, long before James Otis, Lord Somers said to a committee of the House of Commons, that the possession of the vote is the only true security which an Englishman has for the possession of his life and property.

Every person, then, is born with an equal claim to every kind of protection of his natural rights which any other person enjoys. The practical question, therefore, is, How shall this protection be best attained? and this is the question of government which, according to the Declaration, is established for the security of these rights. The British theory was that they could better be secured by an intelligent few than by the ignorant and passionate multitude. Goldsmith expressed it in singing,

"For just experience shows in every soil,
That those who think must govern those who toil."

Nobody denies that the government of the best is the best government; the practical question is how to find the best, and common-sense replied,

"The good, 'tis true, are Heaven's peculiar care;
But who but Heaven shall show us who they are?"

And our fathers answered the question of the best and surest protection of natural right by their famous phrase, "the consent of the governed." That is to say, since every man is born with equal natural rights, he is entitled to an equal protection of them with all other men; and since government is that protection, right reason and experience alike demand that every person shall have a voice in the government upon perfectly equal and practicable terms—that is, upon terms which are not necessarily and absolutely insurmountable by any part of the people. These terms cannot rightfully be arbitrary.

But the argument of the honorable gentleman from Schenectady, whose lucid and dignified discourse needs no praise of mine, and the arguments of others who have derived government from society, seemed to assume that the political people may exclude and include at their pleasure; that they may establish purely arbitrary tests, such as height or weight or color or sex. This was substantially the squatter sovereignty of Mr. Douglas, who held that the male white majority of the settlers in a territory might deprive a colored minority of all their rights whatever; and he declared that they

had the right to do it. The same right that this Convention has to hang me at this moment to that chandelier, but no other right. Brute force, sir, may do anything; but we are speaking of rights, and of rights under this government, and I deny that the people of the State of New York can rightfully, that is, according to right reason and the principles of this government derived from it, *permanently* exclude any class of persons or any person whatever from a voice in the government, unless it can be clearly established that their participation in political power would be dangerous to the State; and, therefore, the honorable gentleman from Kings was logically correct in opposing the enfranchisement of the colored man, upon the ground that he was of an inferior race of limited intelligence—a kind of chimpanzee at best. I think, sir, the honorable and scholarly gentleman—even he—will admit that at Fort Pillow, at Milliken's Bend, at Fort Wagner, the chimpanzees did uncommonly well; yes, sir, as gloriously and immortally as our own fathers at Bunker Hill and Saratoga. "There ought to be no pariahs," says John Stuart Mill, "in a full-grown and civilized nation; no persons disqualified except through their own default. . . . Every one is degraded, whether aware of it or not, when other people, without consulting him, take upon themselves unlimited power to regulate his destiny." "No arrangement of the suffrage, therefore, can be permanently satisfactory in which any person or class is peremptorily excluded; in which the electoral privilege is not open to all persons of full age who desire it." And Thomas Hare, one of the acutest of living political

thinkers, says that in all cases where a woman fulfils the qualification which is imposed upon a man, "there is no sound reason for excluding her from the Parliamentary franchise. The exclusion is probably a remnant of the feudal law, and is not in harmony with the other civil institutions of the country. There would be great propriety in celebrating a reign, which has been productive of so much moral benefit, by the abolition of an anomaly which is so entirely without any justifiable foundation."

The chairman of the committee asked Miss Anthony the other evening whether, if suffrage were a natural right, it could be denied to children? Her answer seemed to me perfectly satisfactory. She said simply, "All that we ask is an equal, and not an arbitrary, regulation. If *you* have the right, *we* have it." The honorable chairman would hardly deny that to regulate the exercise of a right according to obvious reason and experience is one thing, to deny it absolutely and forever is another. The safe practical rule of our government, as James Madison expressed it, is that "it be derived from the great body of the people, not from an inconsiderable portion or favored class of it." When Mr. Gladstone, in his famous speech that startled England, said, in effect, that no one could be justly excluded from the franchise except upon grounds of personal unfitness or public danger, he merely echoed the sentiment of Joseph Warren, which is gradually seen to be the wisest and most practical political philosophy: "I would have such a government as should give every man the greatest liberty to do what he chooses, consistent with restraining him from doing any injury to another." Is

not that the kind of government, sir, which we wish to propose for this State? And if every person in New York has a natural right to life, liberty, and property, and a coexistent right to a share in the government which defends them, regulated only by perfectly equitable conditions, what are the practical grounds upon which it is proposed to continue the absolute and hopeless disfranchisement of half the adult population? It is alleged that they are already represented by men. Where are they so represented, and when was the choice made? If I am told that they are virtually represented, I reply, with James Otis, that "no such phrase as virtual representation is known in law or constitution. It is altogether a subtlety and illusion, wholly unfounded and absurd." I repeat, if they are represented, when was the choice made? Nobody pretends that they have ever been consulted. It is a mere assumption to the effect that the interest and affection of men in women will lead them to just and wise legislation for women as well as for themselves. This is merely the old appeal for the political power of a class. It is just what the British Parliament said to the colonies a hundred years ago. "We are all under the same government," they said; "our interests are identical; we are all Britons; Britannia rules the wave; God save the king, and down with sedition and Sons of Liberty." The colonies chafed and indignantly protested, because the assumption that therefore fair laws were made was not true; because they were discovering for themselves what every nation has discovered—the truth that shakes England to-day, and brings Dis-

raeli and the Tory party to their knees, and has already brought this country to blood, that there is no class of citizens, and no single citizen, who can safely be intrusted with the permanent and exclusive possession of political power.

"There is no instance on record," says Buckle, in his "History of Civilization in England," "of any class possessing power without abusing it." It is as true of men as a class as it is of an hereditary nobility or of a class of property holders. Men are not wise enough nor generous enough nor pure enough to legislate fairly for women. The laws of the most civilized nations depress and degrade women. The legislation is in favor of the legislating class. In the celebrated debate upon the marriage amendment act in England, Mr. Gladstone said that "when the gospel came into the world woman was elevated to an equality with her stronger companion." Yet, at the very time he was speaking, the English law of divorce, made by men to regulate their domestic relations with women, was denounced by the law lords themselves as "disgusting and demoralizing" in its operation; "barbarous," "indecent," "a disgrace to the country," and "shocking to the sense of right." Now, if the equality of which Mr. Gladstone spoke had been political as well as sentimental, does he or any statesman suppose that the law of divorce would have been what it then was, or that the law of England to-day would give all the earnings of a married woman to her husband; or that of France forbid a woman to receive any gift without her husband's permission?

We ask women to confide in us, as having the same interests with them. Did any despot ever say anything else? And if it be safe or proper for any intelligent part of the people to relinquish exclusive political power to any class, I ask the committee who propose that women should be compelled to do this, to what class, however rich or intelligent or honest, they would themselves surrender *their* power? and what they would do if any class attempted to usurp that power? They know, as we all know, as our own experience has taught us, that the only security of natural right is the ballot. They know, and the instinct of the whole loyal land knows, that when we had abolished slavery the emancipation could be completed and secured only by the ballot in the hands of the emancipated class. Civil rights were a mere mocking name until political power gave them substance. A year ago Governor Orr, of South Carolina, told us that the rights of the freedmen were safest in the hands of their old masters. "'Will you walk into my parlor?' said the spider to the fly." New Orleans, Memphis, and countless and constant crimes showed what that safety was. Then, hesitating no longer, the nation handed the ballot to the freedmen, and said, "Protect yourselves!" And now Governor Orr says that the part of wisdom for South Carolina is to cut loose from all parties, and make a cordial alliance with the colored citizens. Governor Orr knows that a man with civil rights merely is a blank cartridge. Give him the ballot and you add a bullet and make him effective. In that section of the country, seething with old hatreds and wounded

pride, and with its social system upheaved from the foundation, no other measure could have done for real pacification in a century what the mere promise of the ballot has done in a year. The one formidable peril in the whole subject of reconstruction has been the chance that Congress would continue in the Southern States the political power in the hands of a class, as the report of the committee proposes that we shall do in New York.

I do not forget the progressive legislation of New York in regard to the rights of women. The property bill of 1860 and its supplement, according to the New York *Tribune*, redeemed five thousand women from pauperism. In the next year Illinois put women in the same position with men so far as property rights and remedies are concerned. I mention these facts with pleasure, as I read that Louis Napoleon will, under certain conditions, permit the French people to say what they think. But if such reforms are desirable, they would have been sooner effected could women have been a positive political power. Upon this point one honorable gentleman asked Miss Anthony whether the laws for both men and women were not constantly improving, and whether, therefore, it was not unfair to attribute the character of the laws about women to the fact that men made them. The reply is very evident. If women alone made the laws, legislation for both men and women would undoubtedly be progressive. Does the honorable gentleman think, therefore, that women only should make the laws? It is not true, Mr. Chairman, that in the ordinary and honorable sense of the

words women are represented. Laws are made for them by another class and upon the theories which that class, without the fear of political opposition, may choose to entertain, and in direct violation of the principles upon which, in their own case, they tenaciously insist. I live, sir, in the county of Richmond. It has a population of some 27,000 persons. They own property and manage it. They are taxed and pay their taxes, and they fulfil the duties of citizens with average fidelity. But if the committee had introduced a clause into the section they propose to this effect, "Provided that idiots, lunatics, persons under guardianship, felons, inhabitants of the county of Richmond, and persons convicted of bribery, shall not be entitled to vote," they would not have proposed a more monstrous injustice nor a grosser inconsistency with every fundamental right and American principle than in the clause they recommend, and in that case, sir, what do you suppose would have been my reception had I returned to my friends and neighbors, and said to them, "The Convention thinks that you are virtually represented by the voters of Westchester and Chautauqua"?

Mr. Chairman, I have no superstition about the ballot. I do not suppose it would immediately right all the wrongs of women, any more than it has righted all those of men. But what external agency has righted so many? Here are thousands of miserable men all around us; but they have every path opened to them; they have their advocates; they have their votes; they make the laws, and at last and at worst they have their strong right hands. And here are thousands of miserable women

pricking back death and dishonor with a little needle, and now the sly hand of science is stealing that little needle away. The ballot does not make those men happy nor respectable nor rich nor noble. But they guard it for themselves with sleepless jealousy, because they know it is the golden gate to every opportunity; and precisely the *kind* of advantage it gives to one sex it would give to the other. It would arm it with the most powerful weapon known to political society; it would maintain the natural balance of the sexes in human affairs, and secure to each fair play within its sphere.

But, sir, the committee tell us that the suffrage of women would be a revolutionary innovation—it would disturb the venerable traditions. Well, sir, about the year 1790 women were first recognized as school-teachers in Massachusetts. At that time the New England "schoolmarm"—and I use the word with affectionate respect—was a revolutionary innovation. She has been abroad ever since, and has been by no means the least efficient, but always the most modest and unnoticed, of the great civilizing influences in this country. Innovation—why, sir, when Sir Samuel Romilly proposed to abolish the death penalty for stealing a handkerchief, the law officers of the Crown said it would endanger the whole criminal law of England. When the bill abolishing the slave-trade passed the House of Lords, Lord St. Vincent rose and stalked out, declaring that he washed his hands of the ruin of the British empire. When the Greenwich pensioners saw the first steamer upon the Thames, they protested that they did not like the steamer, for it was contrary to nature. When, at the

close of the reign of Charles II., London had half a million of people, there was a fierce opposition to street-lamps. Such is the hostility of venerable traditions to an increase of light. When Mr. Jefferson learned that New York had explored the route of a canal, he benignly regarded it, in the spirit of our committee, as doubtless "defensible in theory," for he said that it was "a very fine project, and might be executed a century hence." And fifty-six years ago, Chancellor Livingston wrote from this city that the proposition of a railroad, shod with iron, to move heavy weights four miles an hour, was ingenious, perhaps "theoretically defensible," but upon the whole the road would not be so cheap or convenient as a canal. In this country, sir, the venerable traditions are used to being disturbed. America was clearly designed to be a disturber of traditions, and to leave nobler precedents than she found. So, a few months ago, what the committee call a revolutionary innovation was proposed by giving the ballot to the freedmen in the District of Columbia. The awful results of such a revolution were duly set forth in one of the myriad veto messages of the President of the United States. But they have voted. If anybody proposed to disturb the election, it was certainly not the new voters. The election was perfectly peaceful, and not one of the Presidential pangs has been justified. So with this reform. It *is* new, in the extent proposed. It is as new as the harvest after the sowing, and it is as natural. The resumption of rights, long denied or withheld, never made a social convulsion. That is produced by refusing them. The West Indian slaves received their

liberty praying upon their knees; and the influence of the enfranchisement of women will glide into society as noiselessly as the dawn increases into day.

Or shall I be told that women, if not numerically counted at the polls, do yet exert an immense influence upon politics, and do not really need the ballot? If this argument were seriously urged, I should suffer my eyes to rove through this chamber and they would show the many honorable gentlemen of reputed political influence. May they, therefore, be properly and justly disfranchised? I ask the honorable chairman of the committee whether he thinks that a citizen should have no vote because he has influence? What gives influence? Ability, intelligence, honesty. Are these to be excluded from the polls? Is it only stupidity, ignorance, and rascality which ought to possess political power? Or will it be said that women do not want the ballot and ought to be asked? And upon what principle ought they to be asked? When natural rights or their means of defence have been immemorially denied to a large class, does humanity or justice or good sense require that they should be registered and called to vote upon their own restoration? Why, Mr. Chairman, it might as well be said that Jack the Giant Killer ought to have gravely asked the captives in the ogre's dungeon whether they wished to be released. It must be assumed that men and women wish to enjoy their natural rights, as that the eyes wish light or the lungs an atmosphere. Did we wait for emancipation until the slaves petitioned to be free? No, sir; all our lives had been passed in ingenious and ignominious efforts to sophisticate and stultify ourselves for

keeping them chained; and when war gave us a legal right to snap their bonds, we did not ask them whether they preferred to remain slaves. We knew that they were men and that men by nature walk upright, and if we find them bent and crawling, we know that the posture is unnatural, whether they may think so or not. In the case of women we acknowledge that they have the same natural rights as ourselves—we see that they hold property and pay taxes, and we must of necessity suppose that they wish to enjoy every security of those rights that we possess. So when in this State, every year, thousands of boys come of age, we do not solemnly require them to tell us whether they wish to vote. We assume as of course that they do, and we say to them, "Go, and upon the same terms with the rest of us, vote as you choose." But gentlemen say that they know a great many women who do not wish to vote, who think it is not lady-like, or whatever the proper term may be. Well, sir, I have known many men who habitually abstained from politics because they were so "ungentlemanly," and who thought that no man could touch pitch without defilement. Now, what would the honorable gentlemen who know women who do not wish to vote have thought of a proposition that I should not vote, because my neighbors did not wish to? There may have been slaves who preferred to remain slaves—was that an argument against freedom? Suppose there are a majority of the women of this State who do not wish to vote—is that a reason for depriving *one* woman who is taxed of her equal representation? or one innocent person of the equal protection of his life and liber-

ty? The amendment proposes no compulsion like the old New England law, which fined every voter who did not vote. If there are citizens of the State who think it unlady-like or ungentleman-like to take their part in the government, let them stay at home. But do not, I pray you, give them authority to detain wiser and better citizens from their duty.

But I shall be told, in the language of the report of the committee, that the proposition is openly at war with the distribution of functions and duties between the sexes. Translated into English, Mr. Chairman, this means that it is unwomanly to vote. Well, sir, I know that at the very mention of the political rights of women there arises in many minds a dreadful vision of a mighty exodus of the whole female world, in bloomers and spectacles, from the nursery and kitchen to the polls. It seems to be thought that if women practically took part in politics, the home would instantly be left a howling wilderness of cradles and a chaos of undarned stockings and buttonless shirts. But how is it with men? Do they desert their workshops, their ploughs and offices, to pass their time at the polls? Is it a credit to a *man* to be called a professional politician? The pursuits of men in the world, to which they are directed by the natural aptitude of sex and to which they must devote their lives, are as foreign from political functions as those of women. To take an extreme case. There is nothing more incompatible with political duties in cooking and taking care of children than there is in digging ditches or making shoes or in any other necessary employment, while in every superior interest of society

growing out of the family the stake of women is not less than men, and their knowledge is greater.

In England a woman who owns shares in the East India Company may vote. In this country she may vote, as a stockholder, upon a railroad from one end of the country to another. But if she sells her stock and buys a house with the money, she has no voice in the laying out of the road before her door, which her house is taxed to keep and pay for. And why, in the name of good sense, if a responsible human being may vote upon specific industrial projects may she not vote upon the industrial regulation of the State? There is no more reason that men should assume to decide participation in politics to be unwomanly, than that women should decide for men that it is unmanly. It is not our prerogative to keep women feminine. I think, sir, they may be trusted to defend the delicacy of their own sex. Our success in managing ours has not been so conspicuous that we should urgently desire more labor of the same kind. Nature is quite as wise as we. Whatever their sex incapacitates women from doing they will not do. Whatever duty is consistent with their sex and their relation to society they will properly demand to do until they are permitted.

When the committee declare that voting is at war with the distribution of functions between the sexes, what do they mean? Are not women as much interested in good government as men? Has the mother less at stake in equal laws honestly administered than the father? There is fraud in the legislature; there is corruption in the courts; there are hospitals and tene-

ment-houses and prisons; there are gambling-houses and billiard-rooms and brothels; there are grog-shops at every corner, and I know not what enormous proportion of crime in the State proceeds from them; there are forty thousand drunkards in the State and their hundreds of thousands of children. All these things are subjects of legislation, and under the exclusive legislation of men the crime associated with all these things becomes vast and complicated; have the wives and mothers and sisters of New York less vital interest in them, less practical knowledge of them and their proper treatment, than the husbands and fathers? No man is so insane as to pretend it. Is there then any natural incapacity in women to understand politics? It is not asserted. Are they lacking in the necessary intelligence? But the moment that you erect a standard of intelligence which is sufficient to exclude women as a sex, that moment most of their amiable fellow-citizens in trousers would be disfranchised. Is it that they ought not to go to public political meetings? But we earnestly invite them. Or that they should not go to the polls? Some polls, I allow, in the larger cities, are dirty and dangerous places, and those it is the duty of the police to reform. But no decent man wishes to vote in a grog-shop, or to have his head broken while he is doing it; while the mere act of dropping a ballot in a box is about the simplest, shortest, and cleanest that can be done.

Last winter Senator Frelinghuysen, repeating, I am sure thoughtlessly, the common rhetoric of the question, spoke of the high and holy mission of women. But if

people with a high and holy mission may innocently sit bare-necked in hot theatres to be studied through pocket telescopes until midnight by any one who chooses, how can their high and holy mission be harmed by their quietly dropping a ballot in a box? But if women vote, they must sit on juries. Why not? Nothing is plainer than that thousands of women who are tried every year as criminals are not tried by their peers. And if a woman is bad enough to commit a heinous crime, must we absurdly assume that women are too good to know that there is such a crime? If they may not sit on juries, certainly they ought not to be witnesses. A note in Howell's "State Trials," to which my attention was drawn by one of my distinguished colleagues in the Convention, quotes from a work written near the end of the seventeenth century, on the Laws of Scotland, by Sir George Mackenzie, in which he says, speaking of "Probation by Witnesses," "The reason why women are excluded from witnessing must be either that they are subject to too much compassion and so ought not to be more received in criminal cases than in civil cases; or else the law was unwilling to trouble them and thought it might learn them too much confidence and make them subject to too much familiarity with men and strangers, if they were necessitated to vague up and down at all courts upon all occasions." But if too much familiarity with men be so pernicious, are men so pure that they alone should make laws for women, and so honorable that they alone should try women for breaking them? It is within a very few years at the Liverpool Assizes,

in a case involving peculiar evidence, that Mr. Russell said: "The evidence of women is, in some respects, superior to that of men. Their power of judging of minute details is better, and when there are more than two facts and something be wanting, their intuitions supply the deficiency." "And precisely the qualities which fit them to give evidence," says Mrs. Dall, to whom we owe this fact, "fit them to sift and test it."

But, the objectors continue, would you have women hold office? If they are capable and desirous, why not? They hold office now most acceptably. In my immediate neighborhood a postmistress has been so faithful an officer for seven years that when there was a rumor of her removal it was a matter of public concern. This is a familiar instance in this country. Scott's "Antiquary" shows that a similar service was not unknown in Scotland. In "Notes and Queries," ten years ago,* Mr. Alexander Andrews says, "It was by no means unusual for females to serve the office of overseer in small rural parishes," and a communication in the same publication† cites a curious entry in the "Harleian Manuscripts":‡ "The Countess of Richmond, mother to Henry VII., was a justice of the peace. Mr. Atturney said if it was so, it ought to have been by commission, for which he had made many an hower search for the record, but could never find it, but he had seen many arbitriments that were made by her. Justice Joanes affirmed that he had often heard from his mother of the Lady Bartlet, mother to the Lord Bartlet, that she was

* 2d series, vol. ii., 1856, p. 204.
† 1st series, vol. ii., 1855, p. 383.
‡ MS. 980, fol. 153.

a justice of the peace, and did set usually upon the bench with the other justices in Gloucestershire; that she was made so by Queen Mary, upon her complaint to her of the injuries she sustained by some of that county, and desiring for redress thereof; that as she, herself, was chief justice of all England, so this lady might be in her own county, which accordingly the Queen granted. Another example was alledged of one —— Rowse, in Suffolk, who usually at the assizes and sessions there held, set upon the bench among the Justices *gladio cincta*." The Countess of Pembroke was hereditary sheriff of Westmoreland, and exercised her office. Henry VIII. granted a commission of inquiry, under the great seal, to Lady Ann Berkeley, who opened it at Gloucester and passed sentence under it. Henry VIII.'s daughter, Elizabeth Tudor, was Queen of England, in name and in fact, during the most illustrious epoch of English history. Was Elizabeth incompetent? Did Elizabeth unsex herself? Or do you say she was an exceptional woman? So she was, but no more an exceptional woman than Alfred, Marcus Aurelius, or Napoleon were exceptional men. It was held by some of the old English writers that a woman might serve in almost any of the great offices of the kingdom. And indeed if Victoria may deliberate in council with her ministers, why may not any intelligent Englishwoman deliberate in Parliament or any such American woman in Congress? The whole history of the voting and office-holding of women shows that whenever men's theories of the relation of property to the political franchise, or of the lineal succession

of the government, require that women shall vote or hold office, the objection of impropriety and incapacity wholly disappears. If it be unwomanly for a woman to vote or to hold office, it is unwomanly for Victoria to be Queen of England.

Surely if our neighbors had thought they would be better represented in this Convention by certain women, there is no good reason why they should have been compelled to send us. Why should I or any person be forbidden to select the agent whom we think most competent and truly representative of our will? There is no talent or training required in the making of laws which is peculiar to the male sex. What is needed is intelligence and experience. The rest is routine. The capacity for making laws is necessarily assumed when women are permitted to hold and manage property and to submit to taxation. How often the woman, widowed or married or single, is the guiding genius of the family—educating the children, directing the estate, originating, counselling, deciding. Is there anything essentially different in such duties and the powers necessary to perform them from the functions of legislation? In New Jersey the Constitution of 1776 admitted to vote all inhabitants of a certain age, residence, and property. In 1797, in an act to regulate elections, the ninth section provides: "Every voter shall openly and in full view deliver his or her ballot, which shall be a single written ticket, containing the names of the persons for whom he or she votes." An old citizen of New Jersey says that "the right was recognized, and very little said or thought about it in any way." But in 1807 the suffrage was

restricted to white male adult citizens of a certain age, residence, and property, and in 1844 the property qualification was abolished. At the hearing before the committee, the other evening, a gentleman asked whether the change of the qualification excluding women did not show that their voting was found to be inconvenient or undesirable. Not at all. It merely showed that the male property-holders out-voted the female. It certainly showed nothing as to the right or expediency of the voting of women. Mr. Douglas, as I said, had a theory that the white male adult squatters in a territory might decide whether the colored people in the territory should be enslaved. They might, indeed, so decide, and, with adequate power, they might enforce their decision. But it would prove very little as to the right, the expediency, or the constitutionality of slavery in a territory.

The truth is that men deal with the practical question of female suffrage to suit their own purposes. About twenty-five years ago the Canadian government by statute rigorously and in terms forbade women to vote. But in 1850, to subserve a sectarian purpose, they *were* permitted to vote for school trustees. I am ashamed to argue a point so plain. What public affairs need in this State is "conscience," and woman is the conscience of the race. If we in this Convention shall make a wise Constitution, if the Legislatures that follow us in this chamber shall purify the laws and see that they are honestly executed, it will be just in the degree that we shall have accustomed ourselves to the refined moral and mental atmosphere in which women habitually converse. But would you, seriously, I am asked, would you drag

women down into the mire of politics? No, sir; I would have them lift us out of it. The duty of this Convention is to devise means for the purification of the government of this State. Now, the science of government is not an ignoble science, and the practice of politics is not necessarily mean and degrading. If the making and administering of law has become so corrupt as to justify calling politics filthy, and a thing with which no clean hands can meddle without danger, may we not wisely remember, as we begin our work of purification, that politics have been wholly managed by men? How can we purify them? Is there no radical method, no force yet untried, a power not only of skilful checks, which I do not undervalue, but of controlling character? Mr. Chairman, if we sat in this chamber with closed windows until the air became thick and fetid, should we not be fools if we brought in deodorizers, if we sprinkled chloride of lime and burned assafœtida, while we disdained the great purifier? If we would cleanse the foul chamber let us throw the windows wide open, and the sweet summer air will sweep all impurity away and fill our lungs with fresher life. If we would purge politics, let us turn upon them the great stream of the purest human influence we know.

But I hear some one say, If women vote they must do military duty. Undoubtedly, when a nation goes to war it may rightfully claim the service of all its citizens, men and women. But the question of fighting is not the blow merely, but its quality and persistence. The important point is to make the blow effective. Did any brave Englishman who rode into the jaws of

death at Balaklava serve England on the field more truly than Florence Nightingale? That which sustains and serves and repairs the physical force is just as essential as the force itself. Thus the law, in view of the moral service they are supposed to render, excuses clergymen from the field, and in the field it details ten per cent. of the army to serve the rest, and they do not carry muskets nor fight. Women, as citizens, have always done and always will do that work in the public defence for which their sex peculiarly fits them, and men do no more. The care of the young warriors, the nameless and innumerable duties of the hospital and home, are just as essential to the national safety as fighting in the field. A nation of men alone could not carry on a contest any longer than a nation of women. Each would be obliged to divide its forces and delegate half to the duties of the other sex. But while the physical services of war are equally divided between the sexes, the moral forces are stronger with women. It was the women of the South, we are constantly and doubtless very truly told, who sustained the rebellion, and certainly, without the women of the North the government had not been saved. From the first moment to the last, in all the roaring cities, in the remote valleys, in the deep woods, on the country hillsides, on the open prairie, wherever there were wives, mothers, sisters, lovers, there were the busy fingers which, by day and night, for four long years, like the great forces of spring-time and harvest, never failed. The mother paused only to bless her sons, eager for the battle; the wife to kiss her children's father as he went; the sister

smiled upon the brother, and prayed for the lover who marched away. Out of how many hundreds of thousands of homes and hearts they went who never returned; but these homes were both the inspiration and the consolation of the field. They nerved the arm that struck for them. When the son and the husband fell in the wild storm of battle, the brave woman heart broke in silence, but the busy fingers did not falter. When the comely brother and lover were tortured into idiocy and despair, that woman heart of love kept the man's faith steady, and her unceasing toil repaired his wasted frame. It was not love of the soldier only, great as that was; it was knowledge of the cause. It was that supreme moral force operating through innumerable channels, like the sunshine in nature, without which successful war would have been impossible. There are thousands and thousands of these women who ask for a voice in the government they have so defended. Shall we refuse them? I appeal again to my honorable friend the chairman of the committee. He has made the land ring with his cry of universal suffrage and universal amnesty. Suffrage and amnesty to whom? To those who sought to smother the government in the blood of its noblest citizens, to those who ruined the happy homes and broke the faithful hearts of which I spoke. Sir, I am not condemning his cry. I am not opposing his policy. I have no more thirst for vengeance than he has, and quite as anxiously as my honorable friend do I wish to see the harvests of peace waving over the battle-fields. But, sir, here is a New York mother who trained her son in fidelity to God and to

his country. When that country called, they answered. Mother and son gave, each after his kind, their whole service to defend her. By the sad fate of war the boy is thrown into the ghastly den at Andersonville. Mad with thirst he crawls in the pitiless sun towards a muddy pool. He reaches the dead-line, and is shot by the guard—murdered for fidelity to his country. "I demand amnesty for that guard, I demand that he shall vote," cries the honorable chairman of the committee. I do not say that it is an unwise demand. But I ask him, I ask you, sir, I ask every honorable and patriotic man in this State, upon what conceivable grounds of justice, expediency, or common-sense shall we give the ballot to the New York boy's murderer and refuse it to his mother?

I have thus stated what I conceive to be the essential reasonableness of the amendment which I have offered. It is not good for man to be alone, but to be united with woman in the creation of human society; their rights and interests in its government are identical, nor can the highest and truest development of society be reasonably conceived so long as one sex assumes to prescribe limits to the scope and functions of the other. The test of civilization is the position of women. Where they are wholly slaves man is wholly barbarous; and the measure of progress from barbarism to civilization is the recognition of their equal right with man to an unconstrained development. Therefore when Mr. Mill unrolls his petition in Parliament to secure the political equality of women, it bears the names of those English men and women

whose thoughts foretell the course of civilization. The measure which the report of the committee declares to be radically revolutionary and perilous to the very functions of sex, is described by the most sagacious of living political philosophers as reasonable, conservative, necessary, and inevitable; and he obtains for it seventy-three votes in the same House in which out of about the same whole number of voters Charles James Fox, the idol of the British Whigs, used to be able to rally only forty votes against the policy of Pitt. The dawn in England will soon be day here. Before the American principle of equal rights barrier after barrier in the path of human progress falls. If we are still far from its full comprehension and farther from perfect conformity to its law, it is in that only like the spirit of Christianity, to whose full glory even Christendom but slowly approaches. From the heat and tumult of our politics we can still lift our eyes to the eternal light of that principle; can see that the usurpation of sex is the last form of caste that lingers in our society; that in America the most humane thinker is the most practical man, and the organizer of justice the most sagacious statesman.

VIII

FAIR PLAY FOR WOMEN

AN ADDRESS BEFORE THE AMERICAN WOMAN-SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION, AT STEINWAY HALL, NEW YORK, MAY 12, 1870

FAIR PLAY FOR WOMEN

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—It is pleasant to see this large assembly and this generous spirit, for it is by precisely such meetings as this that public opinion is first awakened and public action is at last secured. Our question is essentially an American question. It concerns women, but it is not one of chivalry nor of gallantry. It is a demand for equal rights, and will therefore be heard. Whenever a free and intelligent people asks any question involving human rights or liberty or development, it will ask louder and louder, until it is answered. The conscience of this nation sits in the way like a sphinx, proposing its riddle of true democracy. Presidents and parties, conventions, caucuses, and candidates, failing to guess it, are remorselessly consumed. Forty years ago that conscience asked, "Do men have fair play in this country?" A burst of contemptuous laughter was the reply. "Fair play! It is the very country of fair play"; and the indignant land, drunk with prosperity and ease, turned its back. Louder and louder grew that question, and the land opened its eyes. Louder and louder! and it opened its ears. Louder! until it was one great thunderburst, absorbing all other

questions; and then the country saw that its very life was bound up in the answer, and springing to its feet, alive in every nerve, with one hand it snapped the slave's chain, and with the other welded the Union into a nation—the pledge of equal liberty.

That same conscience sits in the way to-day. It asks another question—"Do women have fair play in this country?" As before, a sneer or a smile of derision may ripple from one end of the land to the other; but that question will swell louder and louder, until it is answered by the ballot in the hands of every citizen, and by the perfect vindication of the American fundamental principle, that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." By its very nature, however, the progress of this reform will differ from every other political movement. Behind every demand for the enlargement of the suffrage hitherto there was always a threat. It involved possible anarchy and blood. When the question agitated England, in 1832, Sir William Napier said that the country quivered on the verge of civil war. The voice of the disfranchised class was muttering thunder around the horizon, and by the lightning of its eyes the British statesmen read the necessity of speedy action. But this reform hides no menace. It lies wholly in the sphere of reason. It is a demand for justice as the best political policy; an appeal for equality of rights among citizens as the best security of the common welfare. It is a plea for the introduction of all the mental and moral forces of society into the work of government. It is an assertion that in the regulation of society no class and no interest can be safely

spared from a direct responsibility. It encounters, indeed, the most ancient traditions, the most subtle sophistry of men's passions and prejudices. But there was never any great wrong righted that was not intrenched in sophistry—that did not plead an immemorial antiquity and what it called the universal consent and "instinct" of mankind.

As Sidney Smith said sixty years ago, in urging the claims of women to a higher education, "Nothing is more common or more stupid than to take the actual for the possible—to believe that all which *is* is all that can be; first, to laugh at every proposed deviation from practice as impossible, then, when it is carried into effect, to be astonished that it did not take place before." That I suppose is the reason why—now that the Fifteenth Amendment is officially adopted—we discover that there were so many original abolitionists, and while we are piously grateful for their number, we can only wonder that, being so many, they did not earlier do their work.

I say that the movement is a plea for justice, and I assert that the equal rights of women, not as citizens, but as human beings, have never been acknowledged. There is no audacity so insolent, no tyranny so wanton, no inhumanity so revolting, as the spirit which says to any human being, or to any class of human beings, "You shall be developed just so far as we choose, and so fast as we choose, and your mental and moral life shall be subject to our pleasure!" and, as Mrs. Howe has said, this is what men have always said to women.

Gibbon, certainly as profound a student of the history of the race as any that we know, says distinctly, "that the wisest or the strongest of the sexes has always usurped the cares and duties of the State, and has confined the other to the cares and pleasures of domestic life." And Montaigne, the shrewdest and most passionless of the observers and critics of society, says, "Women are not at all to blame when they refuse the rules of life that are introduced into the world, forasmuch as the men made them without their consent."

This is true of every condition of society and of every period. Edward Lear, the artist, travelling in Greece, says that he was one day jogging along with an Altanian peasant, who said to him, "Women are really better than donkeys for carrying burdens, but not so good as mules." This was the honest opinion of barbarism—the honest feeling of Greece to-day.

You say that the peasant was uncivilized. Very well. Go back to the age of Pericles. It is the high noon of Greek civilization. It is Athens—"the eye of Greece—mother of arts." There stands the great orator—himself incarnate Greece—speaking the oration over the Athenian dead. "The greatest glory of woman," he says, "is to be the least talked of among men." So said Pericles when he lived. Had Pericles lived to-day he would have agreed that to be talked of among men as Miss Martineau and Florence Nightingale are, as Mrs. Somerville and Maria Mitchell are, is as great a glory as to be the mother of the Gracchi. Women in Greece, the mothers of Greece, were an inferior and degraded class. And Grote sums up their whole condition

when he says, "Everything which concerned their lives, their happiness, or their rights, was determined for them by male relatives, and they seem to have been destitute of all mental culture and refinement."

These were the old Greeks. Will you have Rome? The chief monument of Roman civilization is its law—which underlies our own; and Buckle quotes the great commentator on that law as saying that it was the distinction of the Roman law that it treated women not as persons, but as things. Or go to the most ancient civilization—to China, which was old when Greece and Rome were young. The famous French Jesuit missionary, Abbé Huc, mentions that there is in China a class of women who hold that if they are only true to certain vows during this life, they shall, as a reward, change their form after death and return to earth as men. This distinguished traveller also says that he was one day talking with a certain Master Ting, a very shrewd Chinaman, whom he was endeavoring to convert. "But," said Ting, "what is the special object of your preaching Christianity?" "Why, to convert you and save your soul," said the abbé. "Well, then, why do you try to convert the women?" asked Master Ting. "To save their souls," said the missionary. "But women have no souls," said Master Ting; "you can't expect to make Christians of women"—and he was so delighted with the idea that he went out shouting, "Hi! hi! now I shall go home and tell my wife she has a soul, and I guess she will laugh as loudly as I do!"

Such were these three old civilizations. Do you think we can disembarrass ourselves of history? Our civiliza-

tion grows from roots that lie deep in the remotest past; and our life, proud as we are of it, is bound up with that of Greece and Rome. Do you think the spirit of our society is wholly different? Let us see. It was my good fortune, only a few weeks ago, to be invited to address the students of the Vassar College at Poughkeepsie; which you will remember is devoted exclusively to the higher education of women. As I stood in those ample halls, and thought of that studious household, of the observatory and its occupants, it seemed to me that, like the German naturalist, who, wandering in the valley of the Amazon, came suddenly upon the *Victoria Regia*—the finest blossom on the globe—so there, in the valley of the Hudson, I had come upon one of the finest flowers of our civilization. But in the midst of my enthusiasm I was told by the president that this was the first fully endowed college for women in the world; and from that moment I was alarmed. From behind every door, every tree, I expected to see good Master Ting springing out with his "Hi! hi! you laugh at us Chinese barbarians; you call yourselves in America the head of civilization; you claim that the glory of your civilization is your estimate of women; you sneer at us Chinese for belittling women's souls and squeezing their feet. Who belittle their capacities? Who squeeze their minds?" We must confess it. The old theory of the subservience of women still taints our civilization. As Goethe in his famous morphological generalization showed that every part of the inflorescence of plants, the stamens and pistils, the corolla, the bracts, are all but modifications of the leaf, so I think it would

not be difficult to show that our view of women, greatly improved as it is, is but a modification of the old doctrine.

Within the last fortnight an advocate, pleading for his client before a jury, spoke of him as a man who owned his wife! Nor have I seen a single word of comment or surprise in the press of this city. Take any familiar illustration of the same feeling. You open your morning paper, and read that on the previous evening there was a meeting of intelligent and experienced women, with some that were not so, which is true of all general meetings of men and women; and these persons demanded the same liberty of choice and an equal opportunity with all other members of society. As we read the report we see that there was a great deal of extravagant rhetoric and weak argument and sentimental appeal, which only shows more and more that it was exactly like the public meetings of men. If only those persons could properly hold meetings and speak in public who talk nothing but reason and common-sense, the flood-gates of popular oratory in America would be very suddenly dammed up. But if it is permitted to human beings to demand what is rational, even in a foolish way, there would seem to be nothing very irrational in the claim that equal liberty and opportunity of development shall be secured to every member of society. But the report of the meeting is received with a shout of derisive laughter that echoes through the press and through private conversation. Gulliver did not take the Lilliputians on his hands and look at them with more utter contempt

than the political class of this country, to which the men in this hall belong, take up these women and look askance at them with infinite, amused disdain.

But in the very next column of the same morning paper we find another report, describing a public dinner, at which men only were present. And we read that, after the great orators had made their great speeches, in the course of which they complimented woman so prettily, to the delight of the few privileged ladies who stood behind the screens, or looked over the balcony, or peeped in through the cracks of the windows and doors; and when the great orators had retired with the president, amid universal applause, the first vice-president took the head of the table, punch was brought in, and well towards morning, when the "army" and "navy" and "the press" and the "Common Council" had been toasted and drunk, with three times three, and Richard Swiveller, Esq., had sung his celebrated song, "Queen of my soul!" the last regular toast was proposed—"Woman—Heaven's last, best gift to man," which was received with tumultuous enthusiasm, the whole company rising and cheering, the band playing "Will you come to Kelvin grove, bonnie lassie, O?" and, in response to a unanimous call, some gallant and chivalric editor replied in a strain of pathetic and humorous eloquence, during which many of the company were observed to shed tears or laugh or embrace their neighbors; after which those of the company who were able rose from table, and hallooing "We won't go home till morning!" stumbled along their way home.

This report is not read with great derision or laughter.

It is not felt that by this performance women have been insulted and degraded. Gulliver does not take these men on his hands, and smile or sneer at them as unmanly and vulgar; and these very gentlemen who took part in the dinner, and who — thanks to these gentlemen at this table [the reporters' table] — read, the very next morning, with profound complacency, the report of their evening's proceedings, presently turn to the column in which the report of the woman's meeting is recorded, and instantly rail at the shameless women who renounce their sex, and immodestly forget the sphere to which God had appointed them. And just here, in this feeling, is the spring of the latent hostility—the jesting indifference to the question. It is that political enfranchisement is not considered necessary to the discharge of those duties which men choose to regard as the proper duties of women. I know of no subject upon which so much intolerable nonsense has been talked and written and sung and, above all—saving the presence of our President, Mr. Beecher—preached, as the question of the true sphere of woman, and of what is feminine and what is not, as if men necessarily knew all about it.

Here, at this moment, in this audience, I have no doubt there is many a man who is exclaiming with fervor, "Home, the heaven-appointed sphere of woman." Very well. I don't deny it, but how do you know it? How *can* you know it? There is but one law by which any sphere can be determined, and that is perfect liberty of development. If a man says to me that it is the nature of molten lead to run into bullets, and I know

nothing about lead, I may believe him until I suddenly detect a bullet-mould in his pocket. Then I see that it is the interest of that man that molten lead should run into bullets; and what he calls the nature of lead is merely his own advantage. So I look into history and into the society around me, and I see that the position of women which is most agreeable upon the whole to men is that which they call the "heaven-appointed sphere" of woman. It may or may not be so; all that I can see thus far is that men choose to have it so. Or another gentleman remarks that it is a beautiful ordinance of Providence that pear-trees should grow like vines. And when I say, "Is it so?" he takes me into his garden, and shows me a poor, tortured pear-tree, trained upon a trellis. Then I see that it is the beautiful design of Providence that pear-trees should grow like vines, precisely as Providence ordains that Chinese women shall have small feet, and that the powdered sugar we buy at the grocer's shall be half ground rice. These philosophers might as wisely inform us that Providence ordains Christian saints to be chops and steaks, and then point us to St. Lawrence upon his gridiron.

You see these flowers upon this table. If your good-fortune takes you beyond the city at this moment you will see them everywhere. May-day is but just gone by; and the fields, the woods, the river-banks, renew their summer splendor. Now, if ever, you understand the exquisite music of Shakespeare's song:

> "Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
> And Phœbus 'gins arise;
> His steeds to water at those springs

On chalic'd flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes."

Has nature ordained that the lark shall rise fluttering and singing to the sun in spring? But how should we ever know it if he were prisoned in a cage with wires of gold never so delicate, or tied with a silken string however slight and soft? Is it the nature of flowers to open to the south wind? How could we know it but that, unconstrained by art, their winking eyes respond to that soft breath? In like manner, what determines the sphere of any morally responsible being but perfect liberty of choice and liberty of development? Take those away, and you have taken away the possibility of determining the sphere. How do I know my sphere as a man but by repelling everything that would arbitrarily restrict my choice? How can you know yours as women but by obedience to the same law?

When men gravely assemble to assert their rights and their claims to what they feel to be justly theirs—to the widest personal liberty, to the amplest education, to the pursuit of every honorable profession, to an equal share in the political control of society, to do, in fact, whatever God has given them the will and the power innocently to do, can you conceive of anything more comical than a sudden protest from women that they are forgetting their sphere—deserting the duties which Providence had assigned them—and becoming unmanly and vulgar?

There is something quite as comical, and that is men saying it to women. It is not the business of either

sex to theorize about the sphere of the other. It is the duty of each to secure the liberty of both. Give women, for instance, every opportunity of education that men have. If there are some branches of knowledge improper for them to acquire—some which are in their nature unwomanly—they will know it a thousand-fold better than men. And if, having opened the college, there be some woman in whom the love of learning extinguishes all other love, then the heaven-appointed sphere of that woman is not the nursery. It may be the laboratory, the library, the observatory; it may be the platform or the Senate. And if it be either of these, shall we say that education has unsphered and unsexed her? On the contrary, it has enabled that woman to ascertain so far exactly what God meant her to do.

It is not the duty of men to keep women ignorant that they may continue to be women. But they have as much right to restrict their liberty of choice in education as in any other direction.

The woman's-rights movement is the simple claim that the same opportunity and liberty that a man has in civilized society shall be extended to the woman who stands at his side—equal or unequal in special powers, but an equal member of society. She must prove her power as he proves his. When Rosa Bonheur paints a vigorous and admirable picture of Normandy horses, she proves that she has a hundred-fold more right to do it than scores of botchers and bunglers in color who wear coats and trousers, and whose right, therefore, nobody questions. When the Misses Blackwell or Miss

Zachyzewska or Miss Hunt or Miss Preston or Miss Avery, accomplishing themselves in medicine, with a firm hand and a clear brain carry the balm of life to suffering men, women, and children, it is as much their right to do it—as much their sphere—as it is that of any long-haired, sallow, dissipated boy in spectacles, who hisses them as they go upon their holy mission.

And so when Joan of Arc follows God and leads the army; when the Maid of Saragossa loads and fires the cannon; when Mrs. Stowe makes her pen the heaven-appealing tongue of an outraged race; when Grace Darling and Ida Lewis, pulling their boats through the pitiless waves, save fellow-creatures from drowning; when Mrs. Patten, the captain's wife, at sea — her husband lying helplessly ill in his cabin — puts everybody aside, and herself steers the ship to port, do you ask me whether these are not exceptional women? I am a man and you are women; but Florence Nightingale, demanding supplies for the sick soldiers in the Crimea, and, when they are delayed by red-tape, ordering a file of soldiers to break down the doors and bring them, —which they do, for the brave love bravery—seems to me quite as womanly as the loveliest girl in the land, dancing at the gayest ball in a dress of which the embroidery is the pinched lines of starvation in another girl's face, and whose pearls are the tears of despair in her eyes. Jenny Lind enchanting the heart of a nation; Anna Dickinson pleading for the equal liberty of her sex; Lucretia Mott publicly bearing her testimony against the sin of slavery, are doing what God, by his great gifts of eloquence and song, appointed them to

do. And whatever generous and noble duty, either in a private or a public sphere, God gives any woman the will and the power to do, that, and that only, for her, is feminine.

But have women, then, no sphere as women? Undoubtedly they have, as men have a sphere as men. If a woman is a mother, God gives her certain affections, and cares springing from them, which we may be very sure she will not forget, and to which, just in the degree that she is a true woman, she will be fondly faithful. We need not think that it is necessary to fence her in, nor to suppose that she would try to evade these duties and responsibilities if perfect liberty were given her. As Sydney Smith said of education, we need not fear that, if girls study Greek and mathematics, mothers will desert their infants for quadratic equations or verbs in *mi*.

But the sphere of the family is not the sole sphere either of men or women. They are not only parents, they are human beings, with genius, talents, aspirations, ambition. They are also members of the State, and from the very equality of the parental function which perpetuates the State, they are equally interested in its welfare. Has the mother less concern than the father in the laws that regulate the great social temptations which everywhere yawn for their children, or in the general policy of the government which they are summoned to support? Is she less entitled to the fruits of her industry than he, and if it be best that some arrangement be made by law for the common support of the family, is there any just reason why she should not

be consulted in making the law as well as he? The woman earns property and owns it. Society taxes her, and tries her, and sends her to the jail or to the gallows. Can it be improper that she be tried by her peers, or inexpedient that she have a voice in making the law that taxes her?

It is said that she influences the man now. Very well; do you object to that? And if not, is there any reason why she should not do directly what she does indirectly? If it is proper that her opinion should influence a man's vote, is there any good reason why it should not be independently expressed? Or is it said that she is represented by men? Excuse me; I belong to a country which said with James Otis in the forum and with George Washington in the field that there is no such thing as virtual representation. The guarantee of equal opportunity in modern society is the ballot. It may be a clumsy contrivance, but it is the best we have yet found. In our system a man without a vote is but half a man. When we gave the freedmen their civil rights, we gave them a gun; when we added political equality, we loaded it and made it effective. So long as women are forbidden political equality the laws and feelings of society will be unjust to them.

The other day a young man and his sister graduated at Oberlin with exactly equal rank and ability. They became teachers of the same grade, in the same town—perhaps in the same school. He was paid three or four times as much as she; and when she asked that her salary might be raised, she was replaced by a young man—her pupil—and he was paid a third more than

she had been. If women had a vote, I think that school-committee elected by the people would have a miraculous gift of sight, and suddenly see that exactly equal labor and ability are worth exactly equal wages. Or look into the statutes of Massachusetts. There is one which provides that no married woman can be guardian, even of her own children by a former marriage, until her husband files in the Probate Court his written consent to her assuming the office. Such a law is the consequence of making laws by men only; if women voted, it would follow the fugitive-slave act into obloquy and oblivion.

I have no more superstition about the ballot than about any other method of social improvement and progress. But all experience shows that my neighbor's ballot is no protection for me. We see that voters may be bribed, dazzled, coerced; and where there is practically universal suffrage among men we often see, indeed, corruption, waste, and bad laws. But we nowhere see that those who once have the ballot are willing to relinquish it, and many of those who most warmly oppose the voting of women, also most earnestly advocate the unconditional restoration of political rights to the guiltiest of the late rebel leaders, because they know that to deprive them of the ballot places them at a terrible disadvantage. If, then, it is what I may call an American political instinct that any class of men which monopolizes the political power will be unjust to other classes of men, how much truer is it that one sex as a class will be unjust to the other. And if the usurping sex, as Gibbon calls it, is physically the

stronger, then, just in the degree that it becomes honorable, enlightened, civilized, will it see that no class can safely monopolize political power, and will gladly welcome every restraint upon its own tendency to abuse it.

Yes, I am told, but practical politics is a system of expediency. If the suffrage is to be enlarged, it ought to be shown that the enlargement will promote the general welfare. There are as many ignorant women as there are intelligent, and the change, therefore, will merely increase, without improving, the number of voters. Ignorance may be a proper disqualification for a vote, but ignorance is not confined to sex. If we say that ignorant persons shall not vote, very well. That is one thing. But it is quite another to say that, men and women having an equal interest in good government, ignorant men may vote and intelligent women shall not.

Besides, if we speak of the public welfare, surely we ought to have learned by heart the great lesson which has been written in blood in this country, that nothing is so demoralizing to a people as persistence in obvious and proved injustice—a public policy inconsistent with our fundamental principles. I know, as every man knows, many a woman of the noblest character, of the highest intelligence, of the purest purpose, the owner of property, the mother of children, devoted to her family and to all her duties, and for that reason profoundly interested in public affairs. And when this woman says to me: "You are one of the governing class, your government is founded upon the principle of expressed consent of all as the best security of all. I have as

much stake in it as you, perhaps more than you, because I am a parent, and wish more than many of my neighbors to express my opinion and assert my influence by a ballot. I am a better judge than you or any man can be of my own responsibilities and powers. I am willing to bear my equal share of every burden of the government in such manner as we shall all equally decide to be best. By what right, then, except that of mere force, do you deny me a voice in the laws which I am forced to obey?" What shall I say? What can I say? Shall I tell her that she is "owned" by some living man, or is some dead man's "relict," as the old phrase was? Shall I tell her that she ought to be ashamed of herself for wishing to be unsexed; that God has given her the nursery, the ball-room, the opera, and that if these fail, he has graciously provided the kitchen, the wash-tub, and the needle? Or shall I tell her that she is a lute, a moonbeam, a rosebud? and touch my guitar and weave flowers in her hair and sing,

> "Gay without toil and lovely without art,
> They spring to cheer the sense and glad the heart.
> Nor blush, my fair, to own you copy these.
> Your best, your sweetest empire is to please"?

No, no. At least, I will not insult her. I can say nothing. I hang my head before that woman as when in foreign lands I was asked, "You are an American. What is the nation that forever boasts of the equal liberty of all its citizens, and is the only great nation in the world that traffics in human flesh?"

Or is it said that women do not wish to vote; that

it depends wholly upon themselves, and that whenever a majority of them demand political equality it will be granted? But this is a total surrender of the objection. The argument hitherto has been that it is unwomanly to ask for a share in political power; and if that be so, then the louder the demand becomes the more pressing is the necessity of building the barriers higher and higher. If it be unwomanly to wish to vote, a general demand upon the part of women would be merely an insurrection of women against womanliness, to be put down at all hazards by men, who assume to know what this womanliness is, if women themselves do not. Instead of yielding to a majority, there should be more formidable preparations to resist them. Besides, if it be unwomanly and destructive of the natural and proper sphere of sex for women to vote, when the demand becomes imposing from numbers, it will be necessary to ascertain what has fostered the demand. Then we shall find that it is the constantly growing respect for women, their admission to certain civil rights and to larger education, which has logically led them to demand political rights, and there will be no remedy but in turning civilization backward and restoring them to their condition under the old civilization, which treated them as things and not as persons.

The very moment women passed out of the degradation of the Greek household and the contempt of the Roman law, they began their long and slow ascent, through prejudice, sophistry, and passion, to their perfect equality of choice and opportunity as human

beings; and the assertion that when a majority of women ask for equal political rights they will be granted, is a confession that there is no conclusive reason against their sharing them. And if that be so, how can their admission rightfully depend upon the majority? Why should the woman who does not care to vote prevent the voting of her neighbor who does? Why should a hundred girls who are content to be dolls and do what Mrs. Grundy expects prejudice the choice of a single one who wishes to be a woman and do what her conscience requires? You tell me that the great mass of women are uninterested, indifferent, and, upon the whole, hostile to the movement. You say what of course you cannot know, but even if it were so, what then? There are some of the noblest and best of women both in this country and in England who are not indifferent. They are the women who have thought for themselves upon the subject. The others, the great multitude, are mainly those who have not thought at all, who have acquiesced in the old order, and who have accepted the prejudices of men. Shall their unthinking acquiescence or the intelligent wish of their thoughtful sisters decide the question?

And if women do not care about the question, it is high time that they did, both for themselves and for men. The spirit of society cannot be just, nor the laws equitable, so long as half of the population are politically paralyzed. And this movement, so well begun twenty-two years ago by women whose names will be honored in its history for their undismayed fidelity to the welfare of their sex—this movement is now fully

organized for the very purpose of interesting men and women in the question. It is a pacific agitation, but its issues are immeasurable. You cannot deride it so contemptuously as the last great agitation in this country was derided, nor so bitterly as the corn-law reform in England. Even Mr. Webster, whose business was to know the people and understand politics; who had himself, on Plymouth Rock, declared the cause of liberty to be that of America, and at Niblo's Garden had asserted the omnipotence of conscience in politics—even Mr. Webster derided the antislavery movement as a rub-a-dub agitation.

But it was a drum-beat that echoed over every mountain, and penetrated every valley, and roused the heart of the land to throb in unison. To that rub-a-dub a million men appeared at Lincoln's call, and millions of women supported them. To that rub-a-dub the brave and beautiful and beloved went smiling to their graves. To that rub-a-dub Grant forced his fiery way through the Wilderness; following its roll Sherman marched to the sea, and Sheridan scoured the Shenandoah. The rattling shots of the *Kearsarge* sinking the *Alabama* were only the far-off echoes of that terrible drum-beat. To that rub-a-dub Jefferson Davis fled from Richmond, and the walls of the rebellion and of slavery crumbled at last and forever, as the walls of Jericho before the horns of Israel. That tremendous rub-a-dub, played by the hearts and hands of a great people, fills the land to-day with the celestial music of liberty, and to that people, still thrilling with that music, we appeal!

We can be patient. Our fathers won their independence of England by the logic of English ideas. We will persuade America by the eloquence of American principles. In one of the fierce Western battles among the mountains, General Thomas—whom we freshly deplore—was watching a body of his troops painfully pushing their way up a steep hill against a withering fire. Victory seemed impossible, and the general—even he, a rock of valor and of patriotism—exclaimed, "They can't do it! They'll never reach the top!" His chief of staff, watching the struggle with equal earnestness, placed his hand on his commander's arm and said softly, "Time, time, General; give them time"; and presently the moist eyes of the brave leader saw his soldiers victorious upon the summit. They were American soldiers—so are we. They were fighting an American battle—so are we. They were climbing a height—so are we. Their general gave them time and they conquered. Give us time, and we, too, shall triumph.

IX

THE PURITAN PRINCIPLE: LIBERTY UNDER THE LAW

A SPEECH MADE AT THE DINNER OF THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DEC. 22, 1876

The following account, by the Rev. Edward Everett Hale, of the circumstances attending the delivery of this speech, and of the effect produced by it, appeared in the Boston *Commonwealth*, Sept. 10, 1892 :

"I have said a hundred times, and am glad here to put on record my opinion, that at a great moment in our history George William Curtis spoke the word which was most needed to save the nation from terrible calamity. It was at the annual dinner of the Forefathers' Society of the city of New York, at Delmonico's Hotel, in 1876. That society embodies some of the very best of the leaders of business and of social life in New York, and it is the pride of its managers to assemble on Forefathers' Day the very best of the leaders, who are not of New England blood, who represent the highest and most important interests in that city. On the anniversary of 1876 I had the honor and pleasure of representing at their dinner-party Boston and the New-Englanders who had not emigrated. It was at the moment when the Hayes-Tilden difficulty was at its very worst. Intelligent men and even decent newspapers spoke freely of the possibility of civil war. The dead-lock seemed absolute, and even men perfectly loyal to the principles of American government turned pale as they looked forward to the issue. In the distinguished company of perhaps three hundred representative men, at Delmonico's, about half believed to the bottom of their hearts that Mr. Tilden was chosen President. The other half believed with equal certainty that Mr. Hayes was chosen. I myself had no more doubt then than I have now that Mr. Hayes was fairly chosen. I sat by a mayor of New York, a man of high character and level head, who told me that he had postponed his journey to Cuba that he might be present at Mr. Tilden's inauguration. He was as sure of that inauguration as he was that he lived.

"Before such an audience Mr. Curtis rose to speak. Instantly

—as always—he held them in rapt attention. It would have been perfectly easy for a timid man, or even a person of historic taste, to avoid the great subject of the hour. Mr. Curtis might have talked well about Brewster and Carver, Leyden and Delfthaven, and have left Washington and the White House alone. But he was not a timid man. He was much more than a man of delicate taste, well trained and elegant. And therefore he plunged right into the terrible subject. Terrible is the only word. He passed from point to point of its intricacies, of which he did not underrate the difficulty. He then used the privilege of the occasion, citing the common-sense of the conscientious statesmen of our race; and he came out with his expression of his certain confidence that the good sense of the sons of such an ancestry would devise a tribunal impartial enough and august enough to determine the question to the unanimous assent of the nation.

"He said this so clearly and certainly that he carried with him every man in the assembly. Almost on the moment every man was on his feet, cheering the sentiment. I know that the Mayor of New York and I, who had but just before been absolutely at cross-purposes in our talk, were standing side by side, each with one foot in his chair and the other foot on the table, cheering and waving our handkerchiefs. So was every other man of the twenty guests at the table.

"Those three hundred men of mark in New York went home that night, and went to their business the next day, to say that a court of arbitration must be established to settle that controversy. In that moment of Mr. Curtis's triumph, as I believe, it was settled. This is certain: that from that moment, as every careful reader may find to-day, the whole tone of the press of all parties in the city of New York expressed the belief which he expressed then, and which that assembly of leaders approved by their cheers. And from that moment to this moment there has been no more talk of civil war.

"Because I remember Mr. Curtis in a scene like this, where he showed the courage of his convictions, I am a little sensitive when I hear people speak of his 'elegance' and 'eloquence,' and of his being 'the last of the orators,' as if he were only or chiefly a dainty man, who valued especially the arts of expression. Un-

doubtedly he did value them, for he was not a fool. But he valued them for the use which he could make of them for the welfare of the State, not for themselves or for his own immediate reputation."

The speech is reprinted from the pamphlet report of the occasion issued by the Society. The indications of applause have been allowed to stand, as showing the spirit and impression of the moment.

THE PURITAN PRINCIPLE: LIBERTY UNDER THE LAW

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the New England Society:—It was Izaak Walton, in his "Angler," who said that Dr. Botelier was accustomed to remark "that doubtless God might have made a better berry than the strawberry, but doubtless he never did." And I suppose I speak the secret feeling of this festive company when I say that doubtless there might have been a better place to be born in than New England, but doubtless no such place exists. [*Applause and laughter.*] And if any sceptic should reply that our very presence here would seem to indicate that doubtless, also, New England is as good a place to leave as to stay in [*laughter*], I should reply to him that, on the contrary, our presence is but an added glory of our mother. It is an illustration of the devout missionary spirit, of the willingness in which she has trained us to share with others the blessings that we have received, and to circle the continent, to girdle the globe, with the strength of New England character and the purity of New England principles. [*Applause.*] Even the Knickerbockers, Mr. President — in whose stately

and splendid city we are at this moment assembled, and assembled of right because it is our home—even they would doubtless concede that much of the state and splendor of this city is due to the enterprise, the industry, and the genius of those whom their first historian describes as "losel Yankees." [*Laughter.*] Sir, they grace our feast with their presence; they will enliven it, I am sure, with their eloquence and wit. Our tables are rich with the flowers grown in their soil; but there is one flower that we do not see, one flower whose perfume fills a continent, which has blossomed for more than two centuries and a half with ever-increasing and deepening beauty—a flower which blooms at this moment, on this wintry night, in never-fading freshness in a million of true hearts, from the snow-clad Katahdin to the warm Golden Gate of the South Sea, and over its waters to the isles of the East and the land of Prester John—the flower of flowers, the Pilgrim's Mayflower. [*Applause.*]

Well, sir, holding that flower in my hand at this moment, I say that the day we celebrate commemorates the introduction upon this continent of the master principle of its civilization. I do not forget that we are a nation of many nationalities. I do not forget that there are gentlemen at this board who wear the flower of other nations close upon their hearts. I remember the forget-me-nots of Germany, and I know that the race which keeps "watch upon the Rhine" keeps watch also upon the Mississippi and the Lakes. I recall—how could I forget?—the delicate shamrock; for

> "There came to this beach a poor exile of Erin,"

and on this beach, with his native modesty,

"He still sings his bold anthem of Erin-go-Bragh."

[*Applause.*] I remember surely, sir, the lily—too often the tiger-lily—of France [*laughter and applause*] and the thistle of Scotland; I recall the daisy and the rose of England; and, sir, in Switzerland, high upon the Alps, on the very edge of the glacier, the highest flower that grows in Europe, is the rare *edelweiss.* It is in Europe; we are in America. And here in America, higher than shamrock or thistle, higher than rose, lily, or daisy, higher than the highest, blooms the perennial Mayflower. [*Applause.*] For, sir and gentlemen, it is the English-speaking race that has moulded the destiny of this continent; and the Puritan influence is the strongest influence that has acted upon it. [*Applause.*]

I am surely not here to assert that the men who have represented that influence have always been men whose spirit was blended of sweetness and light. I confess truly their hardness, their prejudice, their narrowness. All this I know: Charles Stuart could bow more blandly, could dance more gracefully than John Milton; and the Cavalier king looks out from the canvas of Vandyck with a more romantic beauty of flowing love-locks than hung upon the brows of Edward Winslow, the only Pilgrim father whose portrait comes down to us. [*Applause.*] But, sir, we estimate the cause beyond the man. Not even is the gracious spirit of Christianity itself measured by its confessors. If we could see the actual force, the creative power of the Pilgrim principle, we are not to look at the company who came over in the cabin of the *Mayflower;* we are to look upon the

forty millions who fill this continent from sea to sea. [*Applause.*] The *Mayflower*, sir, brought seed and not a harvest. In a century and a half the religious restrictions of the Puritans had grown into absolute religious liberty, and in two centuries it had burst beyond the limits of New England, and John Carver of the *Mayflower* had ripened into Abraham Lincoln of the Illinois prairie. [*Great and prolonged applause.*] Why, gentlemen, if you would see the most conclusive proof of the power of this principle, you have but to observe that the local distinctive title of New-Englanders has now become that of every man in the country. Every man who hears me, from whatever State in the Union, is, to Europe, a Yankee, and to-day the United States are but the "universal Yankee nation." [*Applause.*]

Do you ask me, then, what is this Puritan principle? Do you ask me whether it is as good for to-day as for yesterday; whether it is good for every national emergency; whether it is good for the situation of this hour? I think we need neither doubt nor fear. The Puritan principle in its essence is simply individual freedom. From that spring religious liberty and political equality. The free State, the free Church, the free School —these are the triple armor of American nationality, of American security. [*Applause.*] But the Pilgrims, while they have stood above all men for their idea of liberty, have always asserted liberty *under law* and never separated it from law. John Robinson, in the letter that he wrote the Pilgrims when they sailed, said these words, that well, sir, might be written in gold around the cornice of that future banqueting-hall to

which you have alluded, "You know that the image of the Lord's dignity and authority which the magistry beareth is honorable in how mean person soever." [*Applause.*] This is the Puritan principle. Those men stood for liberty *under the law.* They had tossed long upon a wintry sea; their minds were full of images derived from their voyage; they knew that the will of the people alone is but a gale smiting a rudderless and sailless ship, and hurling it, a mass of wreck, upon the rocks. But the will of the people, subject to law, is the same gale filling the trim canvas of a ship that minds the helm, bearing it over yawning and awful abysses of ocean safely to port. [*Loud applause.*]

Now, gentlemen, in this country the Puritan principle in its development has advanced to this point, that it provides us a lawful remedy for every emergency that may arise. [*Cheers.*] I stand here as a son of New England. In every fibre of my being am I a child of the Pilgrims. [*Applause.*] The most knightly of all the gentlemen at Elizabeth's court said to the young poet, when he would write an immortal song, "Look into thy heart and write." And I, sir and brothers, if, looking into my own heart at this moment, I might dare to think that what I find written there is written also upon the heart of my mother, clad in her snows at home, her voice in this hour would be a message spoken from the land of the Pilgrims to the capital of this nation—a message like that which Patrick Henry sent from Virginia to Massachusetts when he heard of Concord and Lexington: "I am not a Virginian, I am an American." [*Great applause.*] And so, gentlemen, at this

hour, we are not Republicans, we are not Democrats, we are Americans. [*Tremendous applause.*]

The voice of New England, I believe, going to the capital, would be this, that neither is the Republican Senate to insist upon its exclusive partisan way, nor is the Democratic House to insist upon its exclusive partisan way, but Senate and House, representing the American people and the American people only, in the light of the Constitution and by the authority of the law, are to provide a way over which a President, be he Republican or be he Democrat, shall pass unchallenged to his chair. [*Vociferous applause, the company rising to their feet.*] Ah, gentlemen [*renewed applause*]—think not, Mr. President, that I am forgetting the occasion or its amenities. [Cries of "No, no," and "Go on."] I am remembering the Puritans; I am remembering Plymouth Rock, and the virtues that made it illustrious. [A voice—"Justice."] But we, gentlemen, are to imitate those virtues, as our toast says, only by being greater than the men who stood upon that rock. [*Applause.*] As this gay and luxurious banquet to their scant and severe fare, so must our virtues, to be worthy of them, be greater and richer than theirs. And as we are three centuries older, so should we be three centuries wiser than they. [*Applause.*] Sons of the Pilgrims, you are not to level forests, you are not to war with savage men and savage beasts, you are not to tame a continent nor even found a State. Our task is nobler, is diviner. Our task, sir, is to reconcile a nation. It is to curb the fury of party spirit. It is to introduce a loftier and manlier tone everywhere into

our political life. It is to educate every boy and every girl, and then leave them perfectly free to go from any school-house to any church. [*Cries of "Good," and cheers.*] Above all, sir, it is to protect absolutely the equal rights of the poorest and the richest, of the most ignorant and the most intelligent citizen, and it is to stand forth, brethren, as a triple wall of brass around our native land, against the mad blows of violence or the fatal dry-rot of fraud. [*Loud applause.*] And at this moment, sir, the grave and august shades of the forefathers whom we invoke bend over us in benediction as they call us to this sublime task. This, brothers and friends, this is to imitate the virtues of our forefathers; this is to make our day as glorious as theirs. [*Great applause, followed by three cheers for the distinguished speaker.*]

X

PURITAN PRINCIPLE AND PURITAN PLUCK

A SPEECH MADE AT THE DINNER OF THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, DEC. 22, 1883, IN ANSWER TO THE TOAST OF "PURITAN PRINCIPLE AND PURITAN PLUCK."

PURITAN PRINCIPLE AND PURITAN PLUCK

PURITAN principle and Puritan pluck! But how shall we separate them? I remember many years ago when I was one of a group of young writers upon the *Tribune*, and Mr. Greeley was an ardent temperance reformer, that a vigorous article appeared one morning urging young men to avoid the tempter in whatever form he might appear, whether as punch or bitters, as sherry or Madeira, as hock or claret, as Heidsieck or champagne. [*Laughter.*] The young writers—who were *not* ardent temperance reformers—greeted Mr. Greeley uproariously when he appeared at the office, and with infinite glee pointed out to him that Heidsieck was not a different wine, but only a particular brand of champagne. As the laugh rang round the room, Mr. Greeley, who, as his opponents usually found, was quite able to hold his own, leaned with his shoulder against the wall looking benignly at the laughing chorus, and when it became quiet he said, "Wal, boys, I guess I'm the only man in this office that could have made *that* mistake," and then added, "It don't matter what you call him, champagne or Heidsieck or absinthe, he's the same old devil." [*Much laughter.*] It was what the English

Royalists and Archbishop Laud said in England, and what old Peter Stuyvesant and the Dutchmen said in New York, of a very different force. It does not matter what you call it, Puritan principle or Puritan pluck, it is the same old devil.

The other evening our amiable fellow-citizens the Knickerbockers held their annual feast, and our friend General Sharpe ruefully declared that he didn't see what good Evacuation Day had done the children of St. Nicholas, for scarcely was the late Centennial commemoration ended than the Scotchmen in New York deliberately celebrated their existence here, and the Yankees were preparing to celebrate theirs. "When I see these things," said the General, "I tremble for my share of the heritage of Anneke Jans." But he knows the explanation. It is the same old devil. When Old England marched out of New York, New England marched in. It has held possession ever since, and the General will find that when the Anneke Jans estate comes to be settled, Puritan principle and Puritan pluck will divide it between them. The Pilgrim Fathers in the city, who are now engaged in proving that the electric wires in the streets are a benevolent system of municipal life-preservers, and that no well-regulated man of business can possibly tell where his account-books are; [*Applause*] or who, seated, a group of modern Mariuses amid the ruins of Golgoi, are demonstrating conclusively that the proper study of mankind is the Venus Aphrodite of Cyprus [*Laughter*]—these learned gentlemen will prove incontestably that the only legitimate heirs of Anneke Jans are the descendants of the

Plymouth Pilgrims, and that they, the learned gentlemen themselves, are the sole surviving representatives of those legitimate heirs. [*Applause.*]

Puritan principle and Puritan pluck! Why, Mr. President, whether you contemplate the one or the other, you see but different forms of the same thing. In the old fable, whether the knight looked at the golden side or the silver side, it was still the same resplendent shield. So, whether it was John Pym moving the Grand Remonstrance in Parliament; or John Milton touching the loftiest stop of epic song; or Oliver Cromwell and his Ironsides raising the mighty battle-cry at Worcester and Dunbar, "Arise, O Lord, and scatter thine enemies," then putting spur and sweeping forward like a whirlwind to scatter them; or that immortal company of men and women who, before Pym and Milton and Cromwell, bore their triumphant testimony and renewed upon the wild New England shore the miracle of Moses in the earlier wilderness, making Plymouth Rock like the rock of Horeb, a fountain of refreshment for all the people—all this long line of light in history, like the Milky-Way compact of stars across the sky, is the splendid story of Puritan principle and Puritan pluck. [*Prolonged applause.*]

This principle, which was unswerving fidelity to the individual conscience, made the pluck; and the pluck established the principle. I think, said the philosopher, therefore I am. I believe, said Puritanism, therefore I can. It was not, indeed, a generous and all-embracing faith. Puritanism did not profess to love and serve liberty as we understand it. Above all, it saw

only one side. But that is what makes aggressive leadership.

Among modern Englishmen in public life the one who most resembles the statesmen of the Puritan Commonwealth is John Bright, and Louis Blanc said of him that his distinction was his dogged belief in the righteousness of his own view. It was this uncompromising adherence to his own opinion, this sturdy conviction that his opinion was the only one, which during the long agony of our Civil War made John Bright stand in Parliament as unshaken as John Pym, representing with Puritan principle and Puritan pluck the cause of American union and American liberty. [*Applause.*] Among Americans the distinctive Puritan statesman of our time, the worthy political descendant of John Winthrop and Samuel Adams, whose name can never be mentioned at this New England table without affection and honor, who added to the indomitable conviction of the Roundhead the cultivated graces of the Cavalier, and whose lofty character and unstained life was a perpetual rebuke of mercenary politics and mean ambitions, was Charles Sumner. I was one day talking with him upon some public question, and as our conversation warmed I said to him, "Yes, but you forget the other side." He brought his clinched hand down upon the table till it rang again, and his voice shook the room as he thundered in reply, "There *is* no other side!" There spoke the Puritan. There flamed the unconquerable spirit which swept the Stuarts out of England, liberalized the British Constitution, planted the Republic in America, freed the slaves upon this soil,

and made the Union a national bond of equal liberty. [*Applause.*]

Our good friends the Knickerbockers are never weary of telling us that our fathers were sanctimonious sniffers, who rolled up their eyes and snarled psalms through their noses—canting hypocrites, who persecuted Quakers and hung forlorn old women for witches. Well, Cromwell and his men did sing hymns to some purpose, and the proudest music of the Scotch Highlands was the psalmody of the old Covenanters, whose lingering echoes still haunt those misty mountains. Massachusetts certainly persecuted the Quakers, and so did New York, and the negro hangings in New York a hundred and forty years ago are as atrocious as the witch hangings in Salem. In the game of persecution, as between New England and New York, the dishonors are easy. But when we have called the Puritan a sour-faced fanatic, have we done with him? Is that all? Old John Adams, one of the greatest names in American history, was a small, choleric, and dogmatic man. But the little, dogmatic, and testy man took the Continental Congress, took the American colonies in his arms and lifted them to independence. You do not dispose of John Adams by calling him Sir Anthony Absolute. You do not dispose of the Puritan by calling him Praise-God Barebones. Was he a sour-faced fanatic? But John Robinson, at Leyden, confident that there was more truth to break forth from God's Word, is quite as lofty a figure as Archbishop Laud in London cropping and branding his opponents into ecclesiastical conformity; and the grim old Roundhead, Governor John Endicott, of Massachusetts

Bay, cutting the cross out of the colonial flag, is quite as noble a ruler as the courtly King Charles Stuart of England, parting his love-locks and telling lies to the Parliament. By their fruits ye shall know them. The Puritan may have fined a man for kissing his wife on Sunday, but he led the battle of religious liberty. He may have put a boy in the stocks for insulting the magistrate, but he founded the freest of free commonwealths. By their fruits, not by their roots, ye shall know them. Under the matted, damp leaves in the April woods of New England, straggling and burrowing and stretching far in darkness and in cold, you shall find tough, hard, fibrous roots. But the flower they bear is the loveliest and sweetest of all flowers in the year. The root is black and rough and unsightly. But the flower is the Mayflower. The root of Puritanism may have been gloomy bigotry, but the flower was liberty and its fruit. Behold your country! Sons of the Pilgrims, from Katahdin to the Golden Gate, *si monumentum quaeris, circumspice!*

Well, brethren of the kindred tie, as Mr. Webster called our fathers at this table, we are the heirs of this Puritan principle and Puritan pluck, and what do we propose to do with our splendid heritage? To be worthy of it what can we do but apply it to our circumstances as our fathers did to theirs? They followed the apostolic injunction to do with all their might what their hands found to do; whether they prayed or planted or fought, they did it with all their soul and strength. Cotton Mather tells an excellent story of a Boston divine, who went to preach to the fishermen of Marblehead, and who exhorted them earnestly not to forget religion, which was

the main end of the settlement. "Oh, no," said one of the fishermen, "not at all; he thinks that he is preaching in Boston. Religion is all very well; that *is* the main end in Boston. But here at Marblehead our main end is fishing." Marblehead fished for cod as diligently as Boston fished for souls. The Pilgrim Fathers fought relentless winter, every kind of personal privation, the wild beasts of the forest, and savage men. But the frost and bears and remorseless foes with which the Pilgrim children must contend are of another kind. If Puritan principle and pluck have largely cleared the continent, and inspiring other influences have in concert with them founded a free Church and a free State, and decreed the equal rights of the people, it is the business of that principle and pluck now to keep the Church and the State free, the government pure, politics honest, and, as our principles defended the people from ancient forms of tyranny, to protect them from new forms of tyranny as they may arise. If, for instance, any body or any power should venture to lay hostile hands on the free, nonsectarian public schools, let Puritan principle warn them to beware, and Puritan pluck stand ready to enforce the warning. If any man or any body of men in high official position, in order to conciliate a political support which they despise, seek to prostitute the government to direct or indirect countenance of crime, let Puritan principle teach them that the corner-stone of English and American liberty is loyalty to law, and Puritan pluck show them that the loss of public and private respect is the price of pandering to ignorance and brutal passion. [*Applause.*] If any conspirators should seek to control

parties and politics for venal purposes and personal ambition, let Puritan principle unmask the bosses and remind them that Puritan pluck cut off the head of King Charles and sent King James spinning out of the three kingdoms. If under our political forms unworthy candidates are offered for our votes, or worthy candidates by unworthy methods, let Puritan principle bolt the nomination, and Puritan pluck scratch the ticket. [*Applause.*] If in our administrative systems, national or State or municipal, abuses of every kind have accumulated into Augean heaps of fraud and corruption, let Puritan principle firmly hold the light of investigation and exposure in the darkest places, and Puritan pluck with a broom of fire sweep them clean. [*Applause.*] Newer forms of the old problems arising from the difference of human condition — vast corporate capital, for instance, upon one side, and individual poverty upon the other—tax more and more the wisdom and humanity of a great people. Let Puritan principle recall these last words which our Pilgrim Fathers heard from John Robinson, to which I have already alluded, that there is more light to break forth from God's Word, and Puritan pluck stand ready to walk steadfastly in the way which that light shall illuminate. Be this spirit, sons of New England, from year to year the consecration of our annual feast, and America will indeed tower aloft—incarnate Liberty enlightening the world, Puritan principle and Puritan pluck will still go round the globe conquering and to conquer, and Carver and Bradford and Winslow, Winthrop and Davenport and Roger Williams, will bend joyfully down to us from Heaven and cry, Well done, good and faithful children! [*Prolonged Applause.*]

XI

THE PUBLIC DUTY OF EDUCATED MEN

AN ORATION DELIVERED AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF UNION COLLEGE, JUNE 27, 1877

THE PUBLIC DUTY OF EDUCATED MEN

It is with diffidence that I rise to add any words of mine to the music of these younger voices. This day, gentlemen of the graduating class, is especially yours. It is a day of high hope and expectation, and the counsels that fall from older lips should be carefully weighed, lest they chill the ardor of a generous enthusiasm or stay the all-conquering faith of youth that moves the world. To those who, constantly and actively engaged in a thousand pursuits, are still persuaded that educated intelligence moulds States and leads mankind, no day in the year is more significant, more inspiring, than this of the College Commencement. It matters not at what college it may be celebrated. It is the same at all. We stand here indeed beneath these college walls, beautiful for situation, girt at this moment with the perfumed splendor of midsummer, and full of tender memories and joyous associations to those who hear me. But on this day, and on other days, at a hundred other colleges, this summer sun beholds the same spectacle of eager and earnest throngs. The faith that we hold, they also cherish. It is the same God that is worshipped at the different altars. It

is the same benediction that descends upon every reverent head and believing heart. In this annual celebration of faith in the power and the responsibility of educated men, all the colleges in the country, in whatever State, of whatever age, of whatever religious sympathy or direction, form but one great Union University.

But the interest of the day is not that of mere study, of sound scholarship as an end, of good books for their own sake, but of education as a power in human affairs, of educated men as an influence in the commonwealth. "Tell me," said an American scholar of Goethe, the many-sided, "what did he ever do for the cause of man?" The scholar, the poet, the philosopher, are men among other men. From these unavoidable social relations spring opportunities and duties. How do they use them? How do they discharge them? Does the scholar show in his daily walk that he has studied the wisdom of ages in vain? Does the poet sing of angelic purity and lead an unclean life? Does the philosopher peer into other worlds and fail to help this world upon its way? Four years before our civil war the same scholar—it was Theodore Parker—said sadly, "If our educated men had done their duty, we should not now be in the ghastly condition we bewail." The theme of to-day seems to me to be prescribed by the occasion. It is the festival of the departure of a body of educated young men into the world. This company of picked recruits marches out with beating drums and flying colors to join the army. We who feel that our fate is gracious which allowed

a liberal training, are here to welcome and to advise. On your behalf, Mr. President and gentlemen, with your authority, and with all my heart, I shall say a word to them and to you of the public duty of educated men in America.

I shall not assume, gentlemen graduates, for I know that it is not so, that what Dr. Johnson says of the teachers of Rasselas and the princes of Abyssinia can be truly said of you in your happy valley—"The sages who instructed them told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man." The sages who have instructed you are American citizens. They know that patriotism has its glorious opportunities and its sacred duties. They have not shunned the one, and they have well performed the other. In the sharpest stress of our awful conflict, a clear voice of patriotic warning was heard from these peaceful academic shades, the voice of the venerated teacher whom this University still freshly deplores,* drawing from the wisdom of experience stored in his ample learning a lesson of startling cogency and power from the history of Greece for the welfare of America.

This was the discharge of a public duty by an educated man. It illustrated an indispensable condition of a progressive republic, the active, practical interest in politics of the most intelligent citizens. Civil and religious liberty in this country can be preserved only

* Professor Tayler Lewis died on May 11, 1877. The work referred to was his "Heroic Periods in a Nation's History."

through the agency of our political institutions. But those institutions alone will not suffice. It is not the ship so much as the skilful sailing that assures the prosperous voyage. American institutions presuppose not only general honesty and intelligence in the people, but their constant and direct application to public affairs. Our system rests upon all the people, not upon a part of them, and the citizen who evades his share of the burden betrays his fellows. Our safety lies not in our institutions, but in ourselves. It was under the forms of the republic that Julius Cæsar made himself emperor of Rome. It was while professing reverence for the national traditions that James II. was destroying religious liberty in England. To labor, said the old monks, is to pray. What we earnestly desire we earnestly toil for. That she may be prized more truly, heaven-eyed Justice flies from us, like the Tartar maid from her lovers, and she yields her embrace at last only to the swiftest and most daring of her pursuers.

By the words public duty I do not necessarily mean official duty, although it may include that. I mean simply that constant and active practical participation in the details of politics without which, upon the part of the most intelligent citizens, the conduct of public affairs falls under the control of selfish and ignorant, or crafty and venal men. I mean that personal attention—which, as it must be incessant, is often wearisome and even repulsive—to the details of politics, attendance at meetings, service upon committees, care and trouble and expense of many kinds, patient endurance of rebuffs, chagrins, ridicules, disappointments,

defeats—in a word, all those duties and services which, when selfishly and meanly performed, stigmatize a man as a mere politician; but whose constant, honorable, intelligent, and vigilant performance is the gradual building, stone by stone and layer by layer, of that great temple of self-restrained liberty which all generous souls mean that our government shall be.

Public duty in this country is not discharged, as is so often supposed, by voting. A man may vote regularly and still fail essentially of his political duty, as the Pharisee, who gave tithes of all that he possessed and fasted three times in the week, yet lacked the very heart of religion. When an American citizen is content with voting merely, he consents to accept what is often a doubtful alternative. His first duty is to help shape the alternative. This, which was formerly less necessary, is now indispensable. In a rural community such as this country was a hundred years ago, whoever was nominated for office was known to his neighbors, and the consciousness of that knowledge was a conservative influence in determining nominations. But in the local elections of the great cities of to-day, elections that control taxation and expenditure, the mass of the voters vote in absolute ignorance of the candidates. The citizen who supposes that he does all his duty when he votes places a premium upon political knavery. Thieves welcome him to the polls and offer him a choice, which he has done nothing to prevent, between Jeremy Diddler and Dick Turpin. The party-cries for which he is responsible are, "Turpin and Honesty," "Diddler and Reform."

And within a few years, as a result of this indifference to the details of public duty, the most powerful politician in the Empire State of the Union was Jonathan Wild the Great, the captain of a band of plunderers. I know it is said that the knaves have taken the honest men in a net, and have contrived machinery which will inevitably grind only the grist of rascals. The answer is, that when honest men did once what they ought to do always, the thieves were netted and their machine was broken. To say that in this country the rogues must rule, is to defy history and to despair of the republic. It is to repeat the imbecile executive cries of sixteen years ago, "Oh, dear! the States have no right to go?" and, "Oh, dear! the nation has no right to help itself." Let the Union, stronger than ever and unstained with national wrong, teach us the power of patriotic virtue—and Ludlow Street jail console those who suppose that American politics must necessarily be a game of thieves and bullies.

If ignorance and corruption and intrigue control the primary meeting and manage the convention and dictate the nomination, the fault is in the honest and intelligent workshop and office, in the library and the parlor, in the church and the school. When these are as constant and faithful to their political rights as the slums and the grog-shops, the pool-rooms and the kennels; when the educated, industrious, temperate, thrifty citizens are as zealous and prompt and unfailing in political activity as the ignorant and venal and mischievous, or when it is plain that they cannot be roused to their duty, then, but not until then — if

ignorance and corruption always carry the day—there can be no honest question that the republic has failed. But let us not be deceived. While good men sit at home, not knowing that there is anything to be done, nor caring to know; cultivating a feeling that politics are tiresome and dirty, and politicians vulgar bullies and bravoes; half persuaded that a republic is the contemptible rule of a mob, and secretly longing for a splendid and vigorous despotism — then remember it is not a government mastered by ignorance, it is a government betrayed by intelligence; it is not the victory of the slums, it is the surrender of the schools; it is not that bad men are brave, but that good men are infidels and cowards.

But, gentlemen, when you come to address yourselves to these primary public duties, your first surprise and dismay will be the discovery that, in a country where education is declared to be the hope of its institutions, the higher education is often practically held to be almost a disadvantage. You will go from these halls to hear a very common sneer at college-bred men; to encounter a jealousy of education, as making men visionary and pedantic and impracticable; to confront a belief that there is something enfeebling in the higher education, and that self-made men, as they are called, are the sure stay of the State. But what is really meant by a self-made man? It is a man of native sagacity and strong character, who was taught, it is proudly said, only at the plough or the anvil or the bench. He was schooled by adversity, and was polished by hard attrition with men. He is

Benjamin Franklin, the printer's boy, or Abraham Lincoln, the rail-splitter. They never went to college, but nevertheless, like Agamemnon, they were kings of men, and the world blesses their memory.

So it does; but the sophistry here is plain enough, although it is not always detected. Great genius and force of character undoubtedly make their own career. But because Walter Scott was dull at school, is a parent to see with joy that his son is a dunce? Because Lord Chatham was of a towering conceit, must we infer that pompous vanity portends a comprehensive statesmanship that will fill the world with the splendor of its triumphs? Because Sir Robert Walpole gambled and swore and boozed at Houghton, are we to suppose that gross sensuality and coarse contempt of human nature are the essential secrets of a power that defended liberty against Tory intrigue and priestly politics? Was it because Benjamin Franklin was not college-bred that he drew the lightning from heaven and tore the sceptre from the tyrant? Was it because Abraham Lincoln had little schooling that his great heart beat true to God and man, lifting him to free a race and die for his country? Because men naturally great have done great service in the world without advantages, does it follow that lack of advantage is the secret of success? Was Pericles a less sagacious leader of the State, during forty years of Athenian glory, because he was thoroughly accomplished in every grace of learning? Or, swiftly passing from the Athenian agora to the Boston town-meeting, behold Samuel Adams, tribune of New England against Old England, of America against Europe, of

liberty against despotism. Was his power enfeebled, his fervor chilled, his patriotism relaxed, by his college education? No, no; they were strengthened, kindled, confirmed. Taking his Master's degree one hundred and thirty-four years ago, thirty-three years before the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Adams, then twenty-one years old, declared in a Latin discourse—the first flashes of the fire that blazed afterwards in Faneuil Hall and kindled America—that it is lawful to resist the supreme magistrate if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved. In the very year that Jefferson was born, the college boy, Samuel Adams, on a Commencement day like this, on an academical platform like this on which we stand, struck the key-note of American independence, which still stirs the heart of man with its music.

Or, within our own century, look at the great modern statesmen who have shaped the politics of the world. They were educated men; were they therefore visionary, pedantic, impracticable? Cavour, whose monument is United Italy—one from the Alps to Tarentum, from the lagoons of Venice to the gulf of Salerno; Bismarck, who has raised the German empire from a name to a fact; Gladstone, to-day the incarnate heart and conscience of England—they are the perpetual refutation of the sneer that high education weakens men for practical affairs. Trained themselves, such men know the value of training. All countries, all ages, all men, are their teachers. The broader their education, the wider the horizon of their thought and observation; the more affluent their resources, the more humane their policy.

Would Samuel Adams have been a truer popular leader had he been less an educated man? Would Walpole the less truly have served his country had he been, with all his capacities, a man whom England could have revered and loved? Could Gladstone so sway England with his fervent eloquence, as the moon the tides, were he a gambling, swearing, boozing squire like Walpole? There is no sophistry more poisonous to the State, no folly more stupendous and demoralizing, than the notion that the purest character and the highest education are incompatible with the most commanding mastery of men and the most efficient administration of affairs.

Undoubtedly a practical and active interest in politics will lead you to party association and co-operation. Great public results—the repeal of the corn-laws in England, the abolition of slavery in America—are due to that organization of effort and concentration of aim which arouse, instruct, and inspire the popular heart and will. This is the spring of party, and those who earnestly seek practical results instinctively turn to this agency of united action. But in this tendency, useful in the State as the fire upon the household hearth, lurks, as in that fire, the deadliest peril. Here is our republic —it is a ship with towering canvas spread, sweeping before the prosperous gale over a foaming and sparkling sea; it is a lightning train darting with awful speed along the edge of dizzy abysses and across bridges that quiver over unsounded gulfs. Because we are Americans, we have no peculiar charm, no magic spell, to stay the eternal laws. Our safety lies alone in cool self-possession, directing the forces of wind and wave and fire.

If once the madness to which the excitement tends usurps control, the catastrophe is inevitable. And so deep is the conviction that sooner or later this madness must seize every republic that the most plausible suspicion of the permanence of the American government is founded in the belief that party spirit cannot be restrained. It is indeed a master passion, but its control is the true conservatism of the republic and of happy human progress; and it is men made familiar by education with the history of its ghastly catastrophes, men with the proud courage of independence, who are to temper by lofty action, born of that knowledge, the ferocity of party spirit.

The first object of concerted political action is the highest welfare of the country. But the conditions of party association are such that the means are constantly and easily substituted for the end. The sophistry is subtle and seductive. Holding the ascendency of his party essential to the national welfare, the zealous partisan merges patriotism in party. He insists that not to sustain the party is to betray the country, and against all honest doubt and reasonable hesitation and reluctance he vehemently urges that quibbles of conscience must be sacrificed to the public good; that wise and practical men will not be squeamish; that every soldier in the army cannot indulge his own whims; and that if the majority may justly prevail in determining the government, it must not be questioned in the control of a party.

This spirit adds moral coercion to sophistry. It denounces as a traitor him who protests against party tyr-

anny, and it makes unflinching adherence to what is called regular party action the condition of the gratification of honorable political ambition. Because a man who sympathizes with the party aims refuses to vote for a thief, this spirit scorns him as a rat and a renegade. Because he holds to principle and law against party expediency and dictation, he is proclaimed as the betrayer of his country, justice, and humanity. Because he tranquilly insists upon deciding for himself when he must dissent from his party, he is reviled as a popinjay and a visionary fool. Seeking with honest purpose only the welfare of his country, the hot air around him hums with the cry of "the grand old party," "the traditions of the party," "loyalty to the party," "future of the party," "servant of the party"; and he sees and hears the gorged and portly money-changers in the temple usurping the very divinity of the God. Young hearts! be not dismayed. If ever any one of you shall be the man so denounced, do not forget that your own individual convictions are the whip of small cords which God has put into your hands to expel the blasphemers.

The same party spirit naturally denies the patriotism of its opponents. Identifying itself with the country, it regards all others as public enemies. This is substantially revolutionary politics. It is the condition of France, where, in its own words, the revolution is permanent. Instead of regarding the other party as legitimate opponents—in the English phrase, His Majesty's Opposition—lawfully seeking a different policy under the government, it decries that party as a conspiracy

plotting the overthrow of the government itself. History is lurid with the wasting fires of this madness. We need not look to that of other lands. Our own is full of it. It is painful to turn to the opening years of the Union, and see how the great men whom we are taught to revere, and to whose fostering care the beginning of the republic was intrusted, fanned their hatred and suspicion of each other. Do not trust the flattering voices that whisper of a Golden Age behind us, and bemoan our own as a degenerate day. The castles of hope always shine along the horizon. Our fathers saw theirs where we are standing. We behold ours where our fathers stood. But pensive regret for the heroic past, like eager anticipation of the future, shows only that the vision of a loftier life forever allures the human soul. We think our fathers to have been wiser than we, and their day more enviable. But eighty years ago the Federalists abhorred their opponents as Jacobins, and thought Robespierre and Marat no worse than Washington's Secretary of State. Their opponents retorted that the Federalists were plotting to establish a monarchy by force of arms. The New England pulpit anathematized Tom Jefferson as an atheist and a satyr. Jefferson denounced John Jay as a rogue, and the chief newspaper of the opposition, on the morning that Washington retired from the Presidency, thanked God that the country was now rid of the man who was the source of all its misfortunes. There is no mire in which party spirit wallows to-day with which our fathers were not befouled; and how little sincere the vituperation was, how shallow a fury, appears when Jefferson and Adams

had retired from public life. Then they corresponded placidly and familiarly, each at last conscious of the other's fervent patriotism; and when they died, they were lamented in common by those who in their names had flown at each other's throat, as the patriarchal Castor and Pollux of the pure age of our politics, now fixed as a constellation of hope in our heaven.

The same brutal spirit showed itself at the time of Andrew Johnson's impeachment. Impeachment is a proceeding to be instituted only for great public reasons, which should, presumptively, command universal support. To prostitute the power of impeachment to a mere party purpose would readily lead to the reversal of the result of an election. But it was made a party measure. The party was to be whipped into its support; and when certain senators broke the party yoke upon their necks, and voted according to their convictions, as honorable men always will whether the party whips like it or not, one of the whippers-in exclaimed of a patriotism, the struggle of obedience to which cost one senator, at least, his life, "If there is anything worse than the treachery, it is the cant which pretends that it is the result of conscientious conviction; the pretence of a conscience is quite unbearable." This was the very acridity of bigotry, which in other times and countries raised the cruel tribunal of the Inquisition and burned opponents for the glory of God. The party madness that dictated these words, and the sympathy that approved them, were treason not alone to the country, but to well-ordered human society. Murder may destroy great statesmen, but corruption makes great States im-

possible, and this was an attempt at the most insidious corruption. The man who attempts to terrify a senator of the United States into casting a dishonest vote, by stigmatizing him as a hypocrite and devoting him to party hatred, is only a more plausible rascal than his opponent who gives Pat O'Flanagan a fraudulent naturalization paper or buys his vote with a dollar or a glass of whiskey. Whatever the offences of the President may have been, they were as nothing when compared with the party spirit which declared that it was tired of the intolerable cant of honesty. So the sneering Cavalier was tired of the cant of the Puritan conscience; but the conscience of which plumed Injustice and coroneted Privilege were tired has been for three centuries the invincible body-guard of civil and religious liberty.

Gentlemen, how dire a calamity the same party spirit was preparing for the country within a few months we can now perceive with amazement and with hearty thanksgiving for a great deliverance. The ordeal of last winter was the severest strain ever yet applied to republican institutions. It was a mortal strain along the very fibre of our system. It was not a collision of sections, nor a conflict of principles of civilization. It was a supreme and triumphant test of American patriotism. Greater than the declaration of independence by colonies hopelessly alienated from the crown and already in arms; greater than emancipation, as a military expedient, amid the throes of civil war, was the peaceful and reasonable consent of two vast parties—in a crisis plainly foreseen and criminally neglected, a crisis in which each party asserted its solution to be indis-

putable—to devise a lawful settlement of the tremendous contest, a settlement which, through furious storms of disappointment and rage, has been religiously respected. We are told that our politics are mean—that already, in its hundredth year, the decadence of the American republic appears and the hope of the world is clouded. But tell me, scholars, in what high hour of Greece, when, as De Witt Clinton declared, "the herb-woman of Athens could criticise the phraseology of Demosthenes, and the meanest artisan could pronounce judgment on the works of Apelles and Phidias," or at what proud epoch of imperial Rome, or millennial moment of the fierce Italian republics, was ever so momentous a party difference so wisely, so peacefully, so humanely composed? Had the sophistry of party prevailed; had each side resolved that not to insist upon its own claim at every hazard was what the mad party spirit of each side declared it to be—a pusillanimous surrender; had the spirit of Marius mastered one party and that of Sylla the other, this waving valley of the Mohawk would not to-day murmur with the music of industry, these tranquil voices of scholars blending with its happy harvest-song; it would have smoked and roared with fraternal war, and this shuddering river would have run red through desolated meadows and by burning homes.

It is because these consequences are familiar to the knowledge of educated and thoughtful men that such men are constantly to assuage this party fire and to take care that party is always subordinated to patriotism. Perfect party discipline is the most dangerous weapon

of party spirit, for it is the abdication of the individual judgment: it is the application to political parties of the Jesuit principle of implicit obedience.

It is for you to help break this withering spell. It is for you to assert the independence and the dignity of the individual citizen, and to prove that party was made for the voter, not the voter for party. When you are angrily told that if you erect your personal whim against the regular party behest, you make representative government impossible by refusing to accept its conditions, hold fast by your own conscience and let the party go. There is not an American merchant who would send a ship to sea under the command of Captain Kidd, however skilful a sailor he might be. Why should he vote to send Captain Kidd to the legislature or to put him in command of the ship of state because his party directs? The party which to-day nominates Captain Kidd will to-morrow nominate Judas Iscariot, and to-morrow, as to-day, party spirit will spurn you as a traitor for refusing to sell your master. "I tell you," said an ardent and well-meaning partisan, speaking of a closely contested election in another State—"I tell you it is a nasty State, and I hope we have done nasty work enough to carry it." But if your State has been carried by nasty means this year, success will require nastier next year, and the nastiest means will always carry it. The party may win, but the State will have been lost, for there are successes which are failures. When a man is sitting upon the bough of a tree and diligently sawing it off between himself and the trunk, he may succeed, but his success will break his neck.

The remedy for the constant excess of party spirit lies, and lies alone, in the courageous independence of the individual citizen. The only way, for instance, to procure the party nomination of good men, is for every self-respecting voter to refuse to vote for bad men. In the mediæval theology the devils feared nothing so much as the drop of holy water and the sign of the cross, by which they were exorcised. The evil spirits of party fear nothing so much as bolting and scratching. *In hoc signo vinces.* If a farmer would reap a good crop, he scratches the weeds out of his field. If we would have good men upon the ticket, we must scratch bad men off. If the scratching breaks down the party, let it break; for the success of the party by such means would break down the country. The evil spirits must be taught by means that they can understand. "Them fellers," said the captain of a canal-boat of his men — "them fellers never think you mean a thing until you kick 'em. They feel that, and understand."

It is especially necessary for us to perceive the vital relation of individual courage and character to the common welfare, because ours is a government of public opinion, and public opinion is but the aggregate of individual thought. We have the awful responsibility as a community of doing what we choose, and it is of the last importance that we choose to do what is wise and right. In the early days of the antislavery agitation a meeting was called at Faneuil Hall, in Boston, which a good-natured mob of sailors was hired to suppress. They took possession of the floor and danced break-

downs and shouted choruses and refused to hear any of the orators upon the platform. The most eloquent pleaded with them in vain. They were urged by the memories of the Cradle of Liberty, for the honor of Massachusetts, for their own honor as Boston boys, to respect liberty of speech. But they still laughed and sang and danced, and were proof against every appeal. At last a man suddenly arose from among themselves and began to speak. Struck by his tone and quaint appearance, and with the thought that he might be one of themselves, the mob became suddenly still. "Well, fellow-citizens," he said, "I wouldn't be quiet if I didn't want to." The words were greeted with a roar of delight from the mob, which supposed it had found its champion, and the applause was unceasing for five minutes, during which the strange orator tranquilly awaited his chance to continue. The wish to hear more hushed the tumult, and when the hall was still he resumed, "No, I certainly wouldn't stop if I hadn't a mind to; but then, if I were you, I *would* have a mind to!" The oddity of the remark and the earnestness of the tone held the crowd silent, and the speaker continued: "Not because this is Faneuil Hall, nor for the honor of Massachusetts, nor because you are Boston boys, but because you are men, and because honorable and generous men always love fair play." The mob was conquered. Free speech and fair play were secured. Public opinion can do what it has a mind to in this country. If it be debased and demoralized, it is the most odious of tyrants. It is Nero and Caligula multiplied by millions. Can there then be a more stringent public duty for

every man—and the greater the intelligence the greater the duty—than to take care, by all the influence he can command, that the country, the majority, public opinion, shall have a mind to do only what is just and pure and humane?

Gentlemen, leaving this college to take your part in the discharge of the duties of American citizenship, every sign encourages and inspires. The year that is now ending, the year that opens the second century of our history, has furnished the supreme proof that in a country of rigorous party division the purest patriotism exists. That and that only is the pledge of a prosperous future. No mere party fervor or party fidelity or party discipline could fully restore a country torn and distracted by the fierce debate of a century and the convulsions of civil war; nothing less than a patriotism all-embracing as the summer air could heal a wound so wide. I know—no man better—how hard it is for earnest men to separate their country from their party, or their religion from their sect. But nevertheless the welfare of the country is dearer than the mere victory of party, as truth is more precious than the interest of any sect. You will hear this patriotism scorned as an impracticable theory, as the dream of a cloister, as the whim of a fool. But such was the folly of the Spartan Leonidas, staying with his three hundred the Persian horde and teaching Greece the self-reliance that saved her. Such was the folly of the Swiss Arnold von Winkelried, gathering into his own breast the host of Austrian spears, making his dead body the bridge of victory for his countrymen. Such was the folly of the Amer-

ican Nathan Hale, gladly risking the seeming disgrace of his name, and grieving that he had but one life to give for his country. Such are the beacon-lights of a pure patriotism that burn forever in men's memories and answer each other through the illuminated ages. And of the same grandeur, in less heroic and poetic form, was the patriotism of Sir Robert Peel in recent history. He was the leader of a great party and the prime minister of England. The character and necessity of party were as plain to him as to any man. But when he saw that the national welfare demanded the repeal of the corn-laws which he had always supported, he did not quail. Amply avowing the error of a life and the duty of avowing it—foreseeing the probable overthrow of his party and the bitter execration that must fall upon him, he tranquilly did his duty. With the eyes of England fixed upon him in mingled amazement, admiration, and indignation, he rose in the House of Commons to perform as great a service as any English statesman ever performed for his country, and in closing his last speech in favor of the repeal, describing the consequences that its mere prospect had produced, he loftily exclaimed: "Where there was dissatisfaction, I see contentment; where there was turbulence, I see there is peace; where there was disloyalty, I see there is loyalty. I see a disposition to confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are the foundations of your institutions." When all was over, when he had left office, when his party was out of power and the fury of party execration against him was spent, his position was greater and

nobler than it had ever been. Cobden said of him, "Sir Robert Peel has lost office, but he has gained a country"; and Lord Dalling said of him, what may truly be said of Washington, "Above all parties, himself a party, he had trained his own mind into a disinterested sympathy with the intelligence of his country."

A public spirit so lofty is not confined to other ages and lands. You are conscious of its stirrings in your souls. It calls you to courageous service, and I am here to bid you obey the call. Such patriotism may be ours. Let it be your parting vow that it shall be yours. Bolingbroke described a patriot king in England; I can imagine a patriot president in America. I can see him indeed the choice of a party, and called to administer the government when sectional jealousy is fiercest and party passion most inflamed. I can imagine him seeing clearly what justice and humanity, the national law and the national welfare require him to do, and resolved to do it. I can imagine him patiently enduring not only the mad cry of party hate, the taunt of "recreant" and "traitor," of "renegade" and "coward," but what is harder to bear, the amazement, the doubt, the grief, the denunciation, of those as sincerely devoted as he to the common welfare. I can imagine him pushing firmly on, trusting the heart, the intelligence, the conscience of his countrymen, healing angry wounds, correcting misunderstandings, planting justice on surer foundations, and, whether his party rise or fall, lifting his country heavenward to a more perfect union, prosperity, and peace. This is the spirit

of a patriotism that girds the commonwealth with the resistless splendor of the moral law—the invulnerable panoply of States, the celestial secret of a great nation and a happy people.

XII

NEW YORK AND ITS PRESS

AN ADDRESS MADE AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NEW YORK STATE PRESS ASSOCIATION, AT UTICA, N. Y., JUNE 8, 1881

NEW YORK AND ITS PRESS

NEW YORK is well called the Empire State. Within its vast domain mountain and forest, city and town, teeming field and humming valley and waste sea-shore, blend their romance, their resources, and their power. Its green uplands pour their abounding waters northward into the Gulf of St. Lawrence and southward into the Gulf of Mexico. Through its luxuriant intervales stretch the great water and iron ways along which hasten the exhaustless harvests of America to feed the world. From the ocean to Lake Erie is strung a chain of cities and towns—a glittering girdle of jewels; and the chief city of the State is the metropolis of the continent—its golden gate of commerce, the fourth city of the world. The sun sees no prouder or more prosperous community; and over this magnificent and majestic territory, these populous and happy homes, these endless schools and work-shops and sky-pointing spires, over all this various intelligence and industry and opulence, the Adirondacks call joyously to the Catskills, and Niagara thunders ceaselessly to Montauk, "This is New York; this is the Empire State."

Assembled here as citizens of that State, who through

the press utter its immediate voice and direct its mighty influence upon public opinion, it is natural that we should mingle with our congratulations some thought of the reasons of honorable pride in the history of our commonwealth, and that we should ask whether any great incident in that history is peculiarly suggestive to us as conductors of the press.

New York, the greatest of the States, has always shown the generous carelessness of greatness. Of the old thirteen she has been most indifferent to her own renown. Massachusetts and Virginia, her Revolutionary peers, have constantly cherished with fond devotion their local traditions and the names of their eminent children; while New York—as if the national element of its first settlers still ruled its temperament—grown immeasurably prosperous, sits like an old Dutch burgher smoking upon his stoop, and watching with good-natured indolence the eagerness of his neighbors as they proudly scour the family escutcheon and build monuments to their ancestors. There is not a child in New England whose heart does not leap at the name of Concord and Lexington, of Bennington and Bunker Hill. But there was many a man in New York to whose blood, four years ago, the name of Oriskany brought no thrill, and to whom the splendid Revolutionary story of the Hudson, on which the sovereignty of the continent was lost and won, is almost unknown.

Yet the history of no State is more inspiring than ours. New York is a palimpsest. Its great empire of to-day is written over the great empire of the five Indian nations whose sonorous names survive in those of

four of the noble counties of central New York, Oneida and Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca, and in that of the beautiful and beneficent Mohawk, the river upon whose shores we stand. Like the heroes before Agamemnon, the Indians had no poet to sing their story. But it lives in fragmentary legend. Through Lake Ontario and Lake Erie at the west, and Lake George and Lake Champlain at the north; through the valleys of the Mohawk and the Hudson, the Susquehanna and the Delaware, the Alleghany and the Ohio, the power of the confederacy swept as resistlessly as the rivers themselves, until it was supreme from Canada to the Carolinas, from the ocean to the Mississippi.

Thus the imperial tradition of the Iroquois fills the State with romantic interest before our annals begin; and the first distinction of the story of the white race here, the glory of the Dutch settlement of New York, is its Indian policy. This was mainly the work of the Dutch superintendent, Arent Van Corlaer, whose weapons in dealing with the Indians were not powder and shot, but good faith, sagacity, and humanity. To the Indian mind he identified these qualities with the white skin, so that when the English succeeded the Dutch and happily retained the Dutch policy, the Indians always called the English governor by the name of their first white friend, Corlaer. In the final contest for the continent with France, it was the fidelity of the Iroquois which gave this region to the supreme dominion and civilization of the English race, and that fidelity was due to the Dutch Indian policy of honesty and justice; a policy which held that red men had rights

which white men were bound to respect. Roger Williams in Rhode Island, William Penn in Pennsylvania, Arent Van Corlaer, Peter Schuyler, and Sir William Johnson in New York, lived at peace with the Indians; and if our national Indian policy has been a blot upon our fame, it is because we have discarded the early New York Indian statesmanship of justice and humanity.

As the country ripened towards the Revolution, and the colonial heart glowed more and more with the passion of union and independence, the story of New York is worthy of proud remembrance, although the indifference of her citizens suffers it to be neglected and half forgotten. Nowhere were American principles earlier or more stoutly asserted, nowhere were they more heroically and triumphantly defended. Unlike the other colonies, New York had no rights of Englishmen guaranteed by royal charter. It depended wholly upon the king's will, and it lacked the homogeneity of population which made its great neighbor, New England, a resistless Revolutionary force. Even in the seventeenth century, when New England was peopled with an unadulterated English stock, there were sixteen different languages spoken in the province of New York. But the Dutch instinct of liberty was strong, and the surrender to the English in 1664 provided that the town of Manhattan should choose deputies, with a free voice in all public affairs; and from that time to the Dongan charter, in 1683, there was a constant contest for a popular assembly. Three years later, when the Dongan charter was revoked, the struggle was renewed. Throughout the eighteenth century the colony wres-

tled with the royal governors for the essential right of self-government, and, although the first proposition to raise a tax in the colonies by stamped paper came from a lieutenant governor of New York, in 1744, yet when, twenty years afterwards, the stamp-act was passed, it was a New York newspaper which was among the earliest voices to raise the battle-cry of the Revolution, "No taxation without representation." It was a New York assembly which first demanded the repeal of the stamp-act, and on the day of the demand established the first colonial committee of correspondence, from which sprang the colonial and the continental congress. In the same year, the year in which the mind of the colonies was thoroughly aroused, John Morin Scott, a young man who, at the Whig Club, had toasted the immortal memory of Oliver Cromwell and John Hampden, and who was now a foremost leader of the Sons of Liberty, with the prophetic instinct of patriotism declared, in Holt's *Gazette*—for already the newspaper was the pioneer of liberty—that if it were necessary for the mother country that the colonies should be taxed without representation, the connection between them ought to cease, and sooner or later it must inevitably cease. This was the earliest voice for independence, and it was the voice of New York. It echoed and re-echoed through the colonies the first notes of the continental pæan that swelled louder and louder into the Declaration of Independence.

In the same year the two hundred principal residents of New York adopted the first non-importation agreement against Great Britain; and five years later—two

months before the Boston massacre—the similar conflict, known as the battle of Golden Hill, was fought in the streets of the city of New York, and the first American blood of the Revolution was shed by British soldiers. As the first congress for the union of the colonies against the French had met in Albany in 1674, so when James Otis proposed the stamp-act congress, in 1765, New York, ripe and ready, promptly responded; and in New York was held the colonial congress by which the union of the United States of America was really founded. When at last the actual struggle of arms began, I believe that New York was the only colony that furnished her full share of men, money, and supplies; and here in this very valley, at old Fort Schuyler, not far away, the American stars and stripes first saluted the morning; and it was on the soil of New York, on the wooded banks of the Hudson, the stately river for whose possession the chief campaign of the Revolution was fought, that the decisive victory was won which secured the independence of the united colonies.

These, and such as these, are the historic glories of New York. But we claim them in no captious or selfish spirit. They are glories for which, with honorable pride, more than one State earnestly contends. We think that New York first called for committees of correspondence, but Massachusetts and Virginia challenge the claim. We think that John Morin Scott first spoke of possible independence, but South Carolina is sure that Christopher Gadsden spoke before him; and Massachusetts cannot admit that any voice of patriotic

prophecy was earlier than that of Samuel Adams. In the great spirit of those great men let us concede that all were first. It was a glorious emulation of patriotism in every colony; but New York, too careless of her fame, may proudly declare that she did not lag behind, but marched shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart with all her brethren. When the news of the Boston port bill reached Virginia, and Patrick Henry exclaimed, "I am no longer a Virginian, I am an American," he spoke equally for New England and New York. It was the harmonious voice of Otis and Adams, of Franklin and Gadsden, of John Morin Scott and Alexander Hamilton. It was the sublime chorus of all the colonies; the birth-cry of the nation whose magnificent maturity we behold.

But there is one event in the history of New York which is almost greater than any of these, and which is especially to be remembered by us and upon this occasion. It belongs with her early Indian policy, with her bold demand for the repeal of the stamp-act, with her declaration of no taxation without representation, with her proud prophecy of independence, her non-importation agreement, her stamp-act congress, and her immortal days of Oriskany and Saratoga. It was in New York that the freedom of the press was first asserted on this continent and triumphantly maintained. The story is familiar, but it ought to be told to-day.

In 1725, the famous printer, William Bradford, issued the first newspaper in New York, the *New York Gazette*. Favored by the government, it supported the governor. But the people grew weary of the endless

rapacity of the royal favorites who were sent over to rule them, and in 1732, when Governor Cosby, to advance a suit of his own, removed the chief justice of the province, sneering that the people were tainted with "Boston principles," and that he had great political interest in England to protect him in anything he chose to do, a storm of popular indignation broke upon him in lampoons and ballads and scorching denunciation. The storm did not blow over. In the next year, 1733, John Peter Zenger, who had been Bradford's apprentice and partner, issued a new paper, the *New York Weekly Journal*, as the advocate of the popular opposition. It opened an incessant battery of argument and wit and raillery and satire against the government—a cannonade of hot shot which was music to the public ear, but warning thunder to the governor and council. After copies of the paper had been publicly but vainly burned by their order, Zenger was arrested and imprisoned on a charge of seditious libel. In jail, where he lay for nine months, he still edited his paper. The grand jury refused to find an indictment, but the attorney-general filed an information for malicious and seditious libel, and when Zenger's counsel excepted to the commissions of two of the judges as illegal, the court struck the names of the counsel from the list of attorneys. The only other able lawyer in New York had been retained by the governor, and Zenger was left virtually without counsel.

But Andrew Hamilton, the most eloquent advocate in Pennsylvania, and famous through all the colonies, heard the cry from New York. He was eighty

years old, but age had not withered him, and, born during the great struggle of the English commonwealth, its principles had been his natal air, and his heart beat high for liberty. He came from Philadelphia to New York, and appeared before the amazed court to plead for Zenger. With impassioned eloquence, Hamilton, who doubtless knew by heart Milton's immortal plea for Unlicensed Printing, made his own great argument. He admitted the publication of the articles. "Then the verdict must be for the king," cried the attorney-general. "Not so," answered Hamilton; "the jury are judges of the law and the fact, and if it be truth it is not a libel." With infinite skill and sparkling humor he followed with remorseless logic the attorney-general's plea, searching his sophistry, confounding him at every point, and then, with a proud and lofty pathetic appeal, Hamilton declared that it was not the cause of a poor printer, nor of New York alone, but of America and of liberty, that was committed to the jury, and to their just and incorrupt verdict he looked with confidence for the defence of the liberty to which nature and the law entitled their fellow-citizen; "the liberty of both exposing and opposing arbitrary power, in these parts of the world at least, by speaking and writing truth."

When Sir Henry Vane was carried to the scaffold, it was said that Justice was seen sitting by his side; and when the Zenger jury cried "Not guilty," and Andrew Hamilton left the court-room, like an aureole around his reverend head shone the freedom of the American press. The thunder of the cannon, the music of the

bells, the joyous feasting, and the fervidly grateful address of the city, saluted not the orator only, but American liberty, which had caught a fresh breath of life from his burning lips.

This is the event in the history of New York which this meeting, and every recurring meeting of this association, ought to commemorate. In New York the press was liberated. In New York the cardinal principle that the truth is not a libel was affirmed. In the Zenger trial in New York, as Gouverneur Morris said, shone the rosy dawn of that liberty which afterwards revolutionized America. And what a tremendous power was thus emancipated! for with a free press popular government began. In a broad sense, a free press is the greatest of all powers of civilization, because the highest, the most beautiful, the most beneficent inspirations of human genius in every branch of literature, are made permanently and universally accessible only by the press. In vain for us the prophets had spoken, the apostles taught; in vain the poets had sung, the philosophers had explored, the inventors experimented, and the historians written; for us Homer and Dante and Shakespeare had been dumb; Plutarch and Bacon, Thucydides and Tacitus, Gibbon and Grote, Bryant and Bancroft, Motley and Emerson and Longfellow had been practically and popularly unknown, except for the mighty and familiar magic of the press.

But ours is a more limited signification of the word. It is not as the universal disseminator of creative literature that we celebrate the press, but as the quick ear and loud tongue of the world's life. Its mere swift-

ness and vast reiteration are overwhelming. Its echoes reverberate around the globe. A single copy of a newspaper would be a snowflake melting as it fell, but a myriad copies are a mighty storm that transfigures the landscape. The press instantly fills the world with the name of the man whom it mentions and with the slightest event that it records. Four centuries ago Columbus discovered America, and only by the slow lapse of time was the world aware of a new continent. Today, before the horses are dry from the wild charge at Balaklava the heart of Christendom is thrilling with the heroic story; and the last sigh of the murdered czar is wafted, almost before the breath ceases, to the cabin on the Oregon frontier.

But while we all learn from the newspaper what is happening in every land, great multitudes learn from it what to think of every event. The unfolding of their paper is the opening of their minds. The newspaper is the daily critic and guide, the creator and the voice of public opinion. It can flash the withering light of publicity on thieves and rascals of high or low degree; or it can slip the slide and hide crime in darkness. It can be a bright and blessed beacon, warning the mariner of reefs and shoals, or the false light of the wrecker luring to death. In our modern civilization, therefore, the newspaper is felt to be the highest power. Every good cause instinctively seeks its aid, and instinctively the enemies of society aim fraudulently to control or forcibly to silence it. Seventy years ago Napoleon's strongest ally of his army in holding Europe subject to his will was his command of the press. The continental

press was in great part his slave. If his mouthpiece, the *Moniteur*, in Paris, accused any person in France or Germany or Italy of an offence towards him, no journal, French, German, or Italian, dared to contradict it. When Tweed owned judges and senators and representatives, he knew that he was still insecure because the press was free. His last and great assault was upon the power of that press which he could not terrify or cajole or buy; and by the power of that undaunted and unbought press the vulgar and insolent, but appalling and threatening conspiracy of Tweed was overthrown.

The growth and development of this power in this country and in this State in which its freedom was first asserted are equally remarkable. One hundred and seventeen years ago, after some feeble and earlier attempts, the first American newspaper was published in Boston. It was not until 1771 that there was a newspaper in Albany, and when the Revolution began there were but three or four small, dingy weekly papers in the State. It is less than one hundred years, in 1784, that the first daily newspaper in the country was published in Philadelphia, the *American Daily Advertiser*, and on the first of March in the next year, 1785, the *New York Daily Advertiser* appeared. Thus the daily press of New York is but ninety-six years old. In its beginning it was a thin voice crying in the wilderness. It is now a mighty chorus, in which the voices of a civilized continent unite.

There are one hundred and fifteen daily newspapers in the State of New York, and there are nine hundred

and sixty-two in the country, so that nearly one eighth of the whole number are in New York. Their aggregate daily circulation is 3,581,187, which is larger than the entire population of the colonies when they declared their independence; and for these daily papers the sum of $26,250,100 is paid annually by the people of the United States, which is more than thirteen times the annual revenue of the national government in Washington's administration. This prodigious growth is well seen in the case of one newspaper. Forty-six years ago the first number of the New York *Herald* appeared with thirty-two advertisements. Two months ago the 16,309th number of the paper was issued with more than 5000 advertisements, filling 109 columns; and the whole paper, with its 28 pages and 168 columns, was sold for five cents, and would have contained a large part of the works of Shakespeare, Byron, or Macaulay. The day before, the Chicago *Times* contained 24 pages of 8 columns each, 192 columns in all. The prosperity of such papers is like their power. No business yields a larger profit than a successful newspaper.

These are dazzling statistics. They are the amazing record of the growth and development of the free press in America, which is nowhere more prodigious than in New York, since the trial of Zenger. That trial established its freedom, and its freedom is now almost unbounded. Nothing is sacred or secure from its eye and its tongue. The newspaper suddenly enters the scholar's library, the merchant's office, the mechanic's shop, the clergyman's study; it penetrates the statesman's cabinet, the department bureau, the legislative commit-

tee-room, and hears and tells all their secrets. Nothing escapes. The discovery of the astronomer at Washington, the strangest tale of the remotest traveller, the private correspondence of the Star-Route contractor, even the dignified and dispassionate councils of the secret sessions of the Senate, are served up at the breakfast of a continent as surely and quietly as the coffee and the rolls.

Not a public event can occur, not a new loan be proposed nor a plan of refunding; not a measure for sweeping the streets of the great city can be introduced into the State legislature, nor an important nomination made by the President, but the newspaper is at a whispering-gallery, murmuring from sea to sea with the views of eminent men everywhere upon the subject. Even the politicians find themselves compelled to have about them that most inconvenient commodity, an opinion, and give it up at the demand of the newspaper. An impulsive man, angered at the invasion of his privacy, may kick the newspaper down stairs; but the nimble paper has its revenge. Dickens has left behind him many a keen disciple upon the daily press; and if the information sought is not to be found, the fury and wrath with which it is refused, made ridiculous with pungent humor, are equally served to a laughing continent with the coffee and the rolls. The victim may retaliate with the horsewhip, but the newspaper, soundly thrashed in the person of its representative, has been known instantly to issue an extra with graphic and elaborate details of the thrashing.

In a quarrel with a newspaper the laugh is against

the private citizen. The press asserts for the public the right of eminent domain over individual affairs. If your daughter is to be married, the newspaper calls to count the towels and see the pattern of the spoons. If the emperor of Crim Tartary or the king of the Cannibal Islands arrive, the newspaper takes an inventory of his bed-chamber, and informs us that he likes his beef rare. It reports its conversations with the statesmen of Europe at the congress of Berlin upon the complication of continental politics, and with the servants of the statesmen about their masters' coats and boots. Like the air and the light, the press is a chartered libertine, and such is the universal and jealous public regard for its liberty, because of the instinctive conviction that no abuse of a free press can be so great as the evil of its suppression, that a suit against a newspaper for defamation is almost hopeless.

By this conceded liberty, this exhaustless resource and resistless enterprise, at once the daily mirror of the world and the reporter of private thought, the power of the press is tremendous, and the responsibility is commensurate with the power. When the press is perfectly free, the editor must himself be the censor, for freedom alone does not secure honesty and fidelity. The enemies of the press, indeed, are not now what they once were, but there are dangerous enemies still, foes of another face and form. "I believe," said Edmund Burke, "there was no professed admirer of Henry VIII. among the instruments of the last King James; nor in the court of Henry VIII. was there, I dare say, to be found a single advocate for the favorites of Richard II."

The enemy of liberty is protean. The magician in the old fairy tale is now an elephant and now a mouse, but he is always a magician. The devil in the temptation of St. Anthony was now a dragon, now a toad, and now a beautiful woman, but he was always the devil. Royal governors and councils no longer menace the press, but to-day its freedom means its independence, and its independence is threatened by a tyranny as crushing as that of a royal governor—the tyranny of party spirit.

I do not need to be told that an editor may be an honest partisan. I do not doubt that I am surrounded by hosts of such editors at this moment. We all probably belong to a party. Public causes are to be promoted and public progress is to be achieved only by concerted and organized action, that is, by party. Not alone in great emergencies of the State, but upon general principles and tendencies of government, we must all take sides. To hesitate like Falkland between the Roundhead and the Cavalier, seeing only too clearly the reason of both, and holding Liberty responsible for the crimes committed in her name, is to falter and fall, a futile patriot, a paralyzed man. We must all wear the blue and buff of the Sons of Liberty or the scarlet livery of the king's regulars. Naturally the army in whose ranks we march becomes identified with the cause. Its colors, its music, its battle-cries become those of the cause itself. Discipline and conformity are held to be paramount necessities, that by obedience and co-operation the army may have the solid force of a torrent instead of the scattering weakness of a shower. So a man

comes to confound his party with his country; and to be wholly partisan seems to him to be only patriotic. Associated with illustrious achievements for his country and for mankind, the party name becomes as sweet to his ear and heart as, after famous victories, the name of his regiment to a soldier. The party tradition seems to him an imperishable principle. The old Democrat who gloried in the Roman firmness of Andrew Jackson; the old Whig whose heart leaped at the bugle-call of Henry Clay, will not believe that his Democracy or his Whiggery is not the purest and the sole patriotism.

But this is only the romantic and poetic aspect of one of the greatest perils of popular government. We liken a party to an army, and the phrases of an election are military terms. But an army is not a cause; it is merely an agency. A party is not a principle and an end; it is only a means. It is the abject servility which is bred by the military spirit that has made a standing army the standing threat of liberty. The army which to-day humbles the foreign foe may to-morrow oppress the people. The army which last year stood fast with Cromwell against the crown may next year, with waving banners and pealing trumpets and beating drums, amid the resounding acclamation of the streets and the joyful ringing of the bells, bring in the king.

Now, as the servility of the military spirit is a standing peril of liberty, so the servility of party spirit is the standing menace of popular government. It persuades us to defend any policy however unwise, and to vote for any candidate however unworthy, upon the plea of maintaining the party supremacy as essential to the

public welfare. If Ananias be nominated upon a platform of falsehood, we must support Ananias to keep the party in power. If Jeremy Diddler buys a regular nomination at the convention, we must hurrah for Diddler and the public faith, that the party of honesty may not be defeated. When the Irishman rode in a sedan-chair without a bottom, he remarked that except for the name of the thing it was very much the same as walking; and to stump for Ananias or to vote for Diddler seems to be very much the same as supporting the party of falsehood and of dishonesty. To cling to the party regardless of the principles of the party, to suppose that a regular nomination can make political sharpers and pettifoggers and traders fit for public trust because they do not pick pockets or burn barns, is to follow the banners and the bugles, the glittering arms and the serried ranks of the army because it is the army, and whether it marches to defend liberty or to destroy it.

This is the party spirit which is the chief enemy of the independence of the press. Governor Cosby tried to silence Zenger for saying what he did not like. Party spirit—a more ruthless despot than Cosby—commands its newspaper to equivocate, to pervert, to deny the truth. Zenger fought the governor and conquered. How many party newspapers dare to disobey the party commands? Yet as the towering spectre of the Brocken is created by the reflection of the terrified peasant himself, so the power before which the party press quails is bodied forth from its fears. It makes its own tyrant. It brands the independence which is the glory

of the citizen and the power of the press itself, the independence which it might make the purifying energy of party, as treason to party. Such a press distorts to its own ends even the news, so that instead of believing a story because it is in print, often the only good reason for not believing it is that it is told by a party newspaper. I have read in a newspaper within a month statements which professed to be news telegraphed from a distance which I am sure were lies written in the office of the paper to promote a personal purpose. "I was in Washington during the late debates," said a friend to me, "and I read a dozen newspaper reports every day, every one of which was virtually falsified by the party feeling of the paper."

This servility to party spirit is the abdication of that moral leadership of opinion which is the great function of the political press. It is a subserviency which destroys the independence of the paper, but it does not save the party. There is not a party in the history of this country which has been utterly overthrown, not the Federal nor the Whig nor the Democratic party, that might not have survived long and victoriously if its press had been courageously independent. The press submits to be led by party leaders, while its duty is to lead leaders. They dare to disgrace their party, to expose it to humiliation and defeat, because they count upon the slavery of the party press. The leaders dare to praise rascals and to justify wrong because they confidently expect their party press to prolong their words in one vast sustained echo of approval from Katahdin to Santa Barbara.

The press is never a more beneficent power than when it disappoints this malign expectation and shows the country that, while loyal to a party and its policy, it is more loyal to honor and patriotism. It is the palladium of liberty because it is the only power in a free country which can alone withstand and overthrow the crafty conspiracy of political demagogues. If it does not lead it is because it chooses to follow; it is because it does not know that no office is so great as that of moulding the opinion which makes parties and presidents; that no patronage is so powerful as the just fear of an unquailing criticism brought home to every word and every act of every public man; and commending its judgment to the intelligence and the conscience of every citizen. The political press of this country does not fulfil its true function until party chiefs in caucuses and conventions and Congress learn that there is a power mightier than all of them combined, which will not come merely at their call, which will not be content merely with the regular party trademark, but which, for the sake of the cause of its party and despite Congress and conventions, will advocate only worthy measures and support only fitting candidates. Thus, and thus alone, can the press of any color save its own party from decay, by forcing leaders to depend for support, not upon party spirit and party patronage, but upon the essential excellence of the party policy and the character of the party candidates. When leaders know that their own party press, which goes into every house and reasons with every voter, will ask first of all whether the candidate nominated

ought to have been nominated, and whether the policy proposed is a sound policy, and whether those who propose to lead are worthy and honorable and faithful leaders, the first care of those leaders will be to provide a body of sound doctrine, and to present candidates like the old chevalier of France, without fear and without reproach.

You will not suppose that I am ignorant of the necessity and power of thorough organization. Only by such means, as I have said, can parties be made effective. Organization is the lens that draws the fiery rays of conviction and enthusiasm to a focus and enables them to burn a way through all obstacles. But party organization must be subordinate, not supreme, while it is the tendency of party spirit to make it paramount. The American principle contemplates an election as an appeal to the patriotic intelligence of the people. Party spirit regards it as a mere contest for success, to be achieved by any means—by money, by forgery, by falsehood, by slander and venomous prejudice, and by the brute force of a military party discipline. It demands that the devil shall be beaten with his own weapons, and that fire shall be fought with fire. From this doctrine proceeds the degradation of our politics which every honest man deplores. Under this malignant influence political power has passed from the people to bands of professional politicians, until reform has come to mean not so much a change of method as the recovery of their own government by the people.

Gentlemen, let us despise the sophistry which asserts that lying can be successfully encountered only by

lying, and corruption only by corruption. Not such was the doctrine of the great leaders of English and American liberty. John Pym, John Milton, and John Hampden, Samuel Adams and George Washington and statesmen nearer our own time, scorned to wriggle and cheat in public as in private life. That elections are necessarily mere contests of corruption is the creed of the pot-house and the politician of the gutter, who echo Dr. Johnson's Tory sneer that patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, and that to speak of honor is only to bid for a higher price of infamy. This degrading theory has been the reproach of the politics of New York from the time of Aaron Burr and the council of appointment to our own. It is this spirit which long ago caused them to be described as ferocious, and which persuaded even so great a man as Alexander Hamilton to urge Governor John Jay to defeat, by a trick which was technically lawful, the declared will of the people at the polls. John Jay wrote upon Hamilton's letter, "Proposing a measure for party purposes which I think it would not become me to adopt."

If the name of the royal Governor Cosby be remembered for his abortive attempt to destroy the freedom of the New York press, shall not that of Governor John Jay be reverently cherished for furnishing to that press the principle of its independent power? It is not by prostituting itself blindly to a party nor by exasperating party spirit, not by distorting the news and perverting the truth for a party purpose, that it can properly exercise its great function in the State; but by making itself the voice of the patriotic intelligence and

public spirit which even while accepting a party name rejects a party collar, which no bluster can dismay nor ridicule dishearten nor flattery cajole, the independent citizenship which is the great conservative element in popular government, the arbiter of American destinies. This is the independence of the press. It is not non-partisanship nor impotent neutrality. It is not the free lance of an Italian bravo or soldier of fortune, the sword of a Sforza or of a Gonzaga at the disposal of the master who pays the best. It is not the unprincipled indifference which cries to-day "Good Lord" and to-morrow "Good Devil," as the Lord or the devil seems to be prevailing. Nor is it a daily guess how the wind is going to blow, and a dexterous conformity to what it believes to be public opinion. No paper and no man who fears to be in the minority has the power to create a majority. It is the unquailing advocacy of its own principles when it stands alone, and honorable support of a party when a party proclaims them; it is scorn of falsehood and baseness and bribery in sustaining them; it is manly justice to opponents, and unsparing exposure of offenders and offences which, disgracing its party, tend to weaken and destroy it; it is austere allegiance to high ideals of public virtue and perfect reliance upon the ultimate justice of the people—it is all this which makes an independent press the greatest power in Christendom.

Gentlemen, if I have spoken but simple and obvious truths, if your hearts respond to mine and your judgment ratifies my words, if you agree with me that the independence of the press is its true power, and its

proper function is to lead parties and leaders, not to follow them,—then, as we stand in this midsummer glory of central New York, as we recall the heroes and tell the inspiring story of our State, let us renew our loyalty to the great advocate who gave our press its freedom, and as children of the Sons of Liberty who overthrew the statue of the king, let us resolve that the sovereign power which shall carry New York still higher and farther upon her glorious way shall be the imperial independence of the press of the Empire State.

XIII

THE LEADERSHIP OF EDUCATED MEN

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE ALUMNI OF BROWN UNIVERSITY, AT PROVIDENCE, R. I., JUNE 20, 1882

THE LEADERSHIP OF EDUCATED MEN

THERE is a modern English picture which the genius of Hawthorne might have inspired. The painter calls it, "How they met themselves." A man and a woman, haggard and weary, wandering lost in a sombre wood, suddenly meet the shadowy figures of a youth and a maid. Some mysterious fascination fixes the gaze and stills the hearts of the wanderers, and their amazement deepens into awe as they gradually recognize themselves as once they were; the soft bloom of youth upon their rounded cheeks, the dewy light of hope in their trusting eyes, exulting confidence in their springing step, themselves blithe and radiant with the glory of the dawn. To-day and here we meet ourselves. Not to these familiar scenes alone — yonder college-green with its reverend traditions; the halcyon cove of the Seekonk, upon which the memory of Roger Williams broods like a bird of calm; the historic bay beating forever with the muffled oars of Barton and of Abraham Whipple; here, the humming city of the living; there, the peaceful city of the dead; — not to these only or chiefly do we return, but to ourselves as we once were. It is not the smiling freshmen of the year, it is

your own beardless and unwrinkled faces, that are looking from the windows of University Hall and of Hope College. Under the trees upon the hill it is yourselves whom you see walking, full of hopes and dreams, glowing with conscious power, and "nourishing a youth sublime"; and in this familiar temple, which surely has never echoed with eloquence so fervid and inspiring as that of your commencement orations, it is not yonder youths in the galleries, who, as they fondly believe, are whispering to yonder maids; it is your younger selves who in the days that are no more are murmuring to the fairest mothers and grandmothers of those maids.

Happy the worn and weary man and woman in the picture could they have felt their older eyes still glistening with that earlier light, and their hearts yet beating with undiminished sympathy and aspiration. Happy we, brethren, whatever may have been achieved, whatever left undone, if, returning to the home of our earlier years, we bring with us the illimitable hope, the unchilled resolution, the inextinguishable faith of youth.

It was as scholars that you were here; it is to the feeling and life of scholars that you return. I mean the scholar not as a specialist or deeply proficient student, not like Darwin, a conqueror greater than Alexander, who extended the empire of human knowledge; nor like Emerson, whose serene wisdom, a planet in the cloudless heaven, lighted the path of his age to larger spiritual liberty; nor like Longfellow, sweet singer of our national spring-time, whose scholarship decorated

his pure and limpid song as flowers are mirrored in a placid stream — not as scholars like these, but as educated men, to whom the dignity and honor and renown of the educated class are precious, however remote from study your lives may have been, you return to the annual festival of letters. "Neither years nor books," says Emerson, speaking of his own college days, "have yet availed to extirpate a prejudice then rooted in me that a scholar is the favorite of heaven and earth, the excellency of his country, the happiest of men."

But every educated man is aware of a profound popular distrust of the courage and sagacity of the educated class. Franklin and Lincoln are good enough for us, exclaims this jealous scepticism; as if Franklin and Lincoln did not laboriously repair by vigorous study the want of early opportunity. The scholar appealing to experience is proudly told to close his books, for what has America to do with experience? as if books were not the ever-burning lamps of accumulated wisdom. When Voltaire was insulted by the London mob, he turned at his door and complimented them upon the nobleness of their national character, their glorious constitution, and their love of liberty. The London mob did not feel the sarcasm. But when I hear that America may scorn experience because she is a law to herself, I remember that a few years ago a foreign observer came to the city of Washington, and said: "I did not fully comprehend your greatness until I saw your Congress. Then I felt that if you could stand that you could stand anything, and I understood the saying

that God takes care of children, drunken men, and the United States."

The scholar is denounced as a coward. Humanity falls among thieves, we are told, and the college Levite, the educated Pharisee, pass by on the other side. Slavery undermines the Republic, but the clergy in America are the educated class, and the Church makes itself the bulwark of slavery. Strong drink slays its tens of thousands, but the educated class leaves the gospel of temperance to be preached by the ignorant and the enthusiast, as the English Establishment left the preaching of regeneration to Methodist itinerants in fields and barns. Vast questions cast their shadows upon the future: the just relations of capital and labor; the distribution of land; the towering power of corporate wealth; reform in administrative methods; but the educated class, says the critic, instead of advancing to deal with them promptly, wisely, and courageously, and settling them as morning dissipates the night, without a shock, leaves them to be kindled to fury by demagogues, lifts a panic cry of communism, and sinks paralyzed with terror. It is the old accusation. Erasmus was the great pioneer of modern scholarship. But in the fierce contest of the Reformation Luther denounced him as a time-server and a coward. With the same feeling, Theodore Parker, the spiritual child of Luther, asked of Goethe, "Tell me, what did he ever do for the cause of man?" and when nothing remained for his country but the dread alternative of slavery or civil war, Parker exclaimed sadly of the class to which he belonged, "If our educated men had done their duty

we should not now be in the ghastly condition we bewail."

Gentlemen, we belong to the accused class. Its honor and dignity are very precious to us. Is this humiliating arraignment true? Does the educated class of America especially deserve this condemnation of political recreancy and moral cowardice? Faithless scholars, laggard colleges, bigoted pulpits, there may be; signal instances you may find of feebleness and pusillanimity. This has been always true. Leigh Hunt said, "I thought that my Horace and Demosthenes gave me a right to sit at table with any man, and I think so still." But when De Quincey met Dr. Parr, who knew Horace and Demosthenes better than any man of his time, he described him as a lisping scandal-monger, retailing gossip fit only for washerwomen to hear. During the earthquake of the great civil war in England, Sir Thomas Browne sat tranquilly in scholarly seclusion, polishing the conceits of the "Urn Burial," and modulating the long-drawn music of the "Religio Medici." Looking at Browne and Parr, at Erasmus and Goethe, is it strange that scholars are impatiently derided as useless pedants or literary voluptuaries, and that the whole educated class is denounced as feeble and impracticable?

But remember what Coleridge said to Washington Alston, "Never judge a work of art by its defects." The proper comment to make upon recreant scholars is that of Brummell's valet upon the tumbled cambric in his hands, "These are our failures." Luther, impatient of the milder spirit of Erasmus and Colet and Sir Thomas More, might well have called them our failures,

because he was of their class, and while they counselled moderation, his fiery and impetuous soul sought to seize triple-crowned error and drag it from its throne. But Luther was no less a scholar, and stands equally with them for the scholarly class and the heroism of educated men. Even Erasmus said of him with friendly wit, "He has hit the pope on the crown and the monks on the belly." If the cowled scholars of the Church rejected him, and universities under their control renounced and condemned him, yet Luther is justified in saying, as he sweeps his hand across them and speaks for himself and for the scholars who stood with him, "These are not our representatives; these are our failures."

So on our side of the sea the educated body of Puritan Massachusetts Bay, the clergy and the magistrates, drove Roger Williams from their borders—Roger Williams, also a scholar and a clergyman, and, with John Milton, the bright consummate flower of Puritanism. But shall not he stand for the scholar rather than Cotton Mather, torturing terrified old women to death as witches! I appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober—from the scholarship that silenced Mrs. Hutchinson and hung Mary Dyer and pressed Giles Corey to death, to the scholarship that argued with George Fox and founded a political commonwealth upon soul-liberty. A year ago I sat with my brethren of the Phi Beta Kappa at Cambridge, and seemed to catch echoes of Edmund Burke's resounding impeachment of Warren Hastings in the sparkling denunciation of the timidity of American scholarship. Under the spell of Burke's burning words Hastings half believed himself to be the villain

he heard described. But the scholarly audience of the scholarly orator* of the Phi Beta Kappa, with an exquisite sense of relief, felt every count of his stinging indictment recoil upon himself. He was the glowing refutation of his own argument. Gentleman, scholar, orator, his is the courage that never quailed; his the white plume of Navarre that flashed meteor-like in the front of battle; his the Amphion music of an eloquence that levelled the more than Theban walls of American slavery. At once judge, culprit, and accuser, in the noble record of his own life he and his class are triumphantly acquitted.

Must we count such illustrations as exceptions? But how can we do so when we see that the Reformation, the mental and moral new birth of Christendom, was the work of the educated class? Follow the movement of liberty in detail, and still the story is the same. The great political contest in England, inspired by the Reformation, was directed by University men. John Pym in the Commons, John Hampden in the field, John Milton in the Cabinet—three Johns, and all of them well-beloved disciples of liberty—with the grim Oliver himself, purging England of royal despotism, and avenging the slaughtered saints on Alpine mountains cold, were all of them children of Oxford and Cambridge. In the next century, like a dawn lurid but bright, the French Revolution broke upon the world. But the only hope of a wise direction of the elemental forces that upheaved France vanished when the educated leader-

* Wendell Phillips.

ship lost control, and Marat became the genius and the type of the Revolution. Ireland also bears witness. As its apostle and tutelary saint was a scholar, so its long despair of justice has found its voice and its hand among educated Irishmen. Swift and Molyneux and Flood and Grattan and O'Connell, Duffy, and the young enthusiasts around Thomas Davis who sang of an Erin that never was and dreamed of an Ireland that cannot be, were men of the colleges and the schools, whose long persistence of tongue and pen fostered the life of their country and gained for her all that she has won. For modern Italy, let Silvio Pellico and Foresti and Maroncelli answer. It was Italian education which Austria sought to smother, and it was not less Cavour than Garibaldi who gave constitutional liberty to Italy. When Germany sank at Jena under the heel of Napoleon, and Stein—whom Napoleon hated, but could not appall—asked if national life survived, the answer rang from the universities, and from them modern Germany came forth. With prophetic impulse Theodore Koerner called his poems "The Lyre and the Sword," for, like the love which changed the sea-nymph into the harp, the fervent patriotism of the educated youth of Germany turned the poet's lyre into the soldier's victorious sword. In the splendor of our American day let us remember and honor our brethren, first in every council, dead upon every field of freedom from the Volga to the Rhine, from John o'Groats to the Adriatic, who have steadily drawn Europe from out the night of despotism, and have vindicated for the educated class the leadership of modern civilization.

Here in America, where as yet there are no ruins save those of ancient wrongs, undoubtedly New England has inspired and moulded our national life. But if New England has led the Union, what has led New England? Her scholarly class. Her educated men. And our Roger Williams gave the key-note. "He has broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of magistrates," said Massachusetts as she banished him. A century later his dangerous opinions had captured Massachusetts. Young Sam Adams, taking his Master's degree at Cambridge, argued that it was lawful to resist the supreme magistrate if the State could not otherwise be preserved. He was a college stripling. But seven years afterwards, in 1750, the chief pulpit orator in New England, Jonathan Mayhew, preached in Boston the famous sermon which Thornton called the morning gun of the Revolution, applying to the political situation the principles of Roger Williams. The New England pulpit echoed and re-echoed that morning gun, arousing the country, and twenty-five years later its warning broke into the rattle of musketry at Lexington and Concord and the glorious thunder of Bunker Hill.

It was a son of Harvard, James Otis, who proposed the assembly of an American congress without asking the king's leave. It was a son of Yale, John Morin Scott, who declared that if taxation without representation were to be enforced, the colonies ought to separate from England. It was a group of New York scholars, John Jay and Scott and the Livingstones, which spoke for the colony in response to the Boston

Port Bill and proposed the Continental Congress. It was a New England scholar in that Congress, whom Rufus Choate declared to be the distinctive and comprehensive orator of the Revolution, John Adams, who, urging every argument, touching every stop of passion, pride, tenderness, interest, conscience, and lofty indignation, swept up his country as into a chariot of fire and soared to independence.

I do not forget that Virginian tongue of flame, Patrick Henry, nor that patriotism of the field and fireside which recruited the Sons of Liberty. The inspiring statue of the Minute Man at Concord—and a nobler memorial figure does not stand upon our soil—commemorates the spirit that left the plough standing in the furrow, that drew Nathaniel Greene from his anvil and Esek Hopkins from his farm; the spirit that long before had sent the poor parishioners of Scrooby to Holland, and filled the victorious ranks of the Commonwealth at Naseby and at Marston Moor. But in America as in England they were educated men who in the pulpit, on the platform, and through the press, conducted the mighty preliminary argument of the Revolution, defended the ancient traditions of English liberty against reactionary England, aroused the colonists to maintain the cause of human nature, and led them from the Gaspee and Bunker Hill across the plains of Saratoga, the snows of Valley Forge, the sands of Monmouth, the hills of Carolina, until at Yorktown once more the king surrendered to the people, and educated America had saved constitutional liberty.

In the next brief and critical period, when through

the travail of a half-anarchical confederation the independent States, always instinctively tending to union, rose into a rural constitutional republic, the good genius of America was still the educated mind of the country. Of the fifty-five members of the Convention, which Bancroft, changing the poet's line, calls "the goodliest fellowship of law-givers whereof this world holds record," thirty-three were college graduates, and the eight leaders of the great debate were all college men. The Convention adjourned, and while from out the strong hand of George Clinton, Hamilton, the son of Columbia, drew New York into the Union, that placid son of Princeton, James Madison, withstanding the fiery energy of Patrick Henry, placed Virginia by her side. Then Columbia and Princeton uniting in Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, interpreted the Constitution in that greatest of commentaries, which, as the dome crowns the Capitol, completed the majestic argument which long before the sons of Harvard had begun. Take away the scholarly class from the discussion that opened the Revolution, from the deliberations that guided it, from the debates of the Constitutional Convention that ended it, would the advance of America have been more triumphant? Would the guarantees of individual liberty, of national union, of a common prosperity, have been more surely established? The critics laughed at the pictured grapes as unnatural. But the painter was satisfied when the birds came and pecked at them. Daily the educated class is denounced as impracticable and visionary. But the Constitution of the United States is the work of American scholars.

Doubtless the leaders expressed a sentiment which was shared by the men and women around them. But it was they who had formed and fostered that sentiment. They were not the puppets of the crowd, light weathercocks which merely showed the shifting gusts of popular feeling. They did not follow what they could not resist, and make their voices the tardy echo of a thought they did not share. They were not dainty and feeble hermits because they were educated men. They were equal citizens with the rest; men of strong convictions and persuasive speech, who showed their brethren what they ought to think and do. That is the secret of leadership. It is not servility to the mob, it is not giving vehement voice to popular frenzy, that makes a leader. That makes a demagogue; Cleon, not Pericles; Catiline, not Cicero. Leadership is the power of kindling a sympathy and trust which will eagerly follow. It is the genius that moulds the lips of the stony Memnon to such sensitive life that the first sunbeam of opportunity strikes them into music. In a great crisis it is thinking so as to make others think, feeling so as to make others feel, which tips the orator's tongue with fire that lights as well as burns. So when Lord Chatham stood at the head of England organizing her victories by land and sea, and told in Parliament their splendid story, his glowing form was Britain's self, and the roar of British guns and the proud acclamation of British hearts all around the globe flashed and thundered in his eloquence. "This is a glorious morning," said the scholar Samuel Adams, with a price set on his head, as he heard the guns at Lexington. "Decus et decorum est," said

the young scholar Joseph Warren gayly, as he passed to his death on Bunker Hill. They spoke for the lofty enthusiasm of patriotism which they had kindled. It was not a mob, an ignorant multitude swayed by a mysterious impulse; it was a body of educated men, wise and heroic because they were educated, who lifted this country to independence and laid deep and strong the foundations of the Republic.

Is this less true of the maintenance and development of the government? Thirty years ago, walking on the Cliff at Newport with Mr. Bancroft, I asked him to what point he proposed to continue his history. He answered: "If I were an artist painting a picture of this ocean, my work would stop at the horizon. I can see no further. My history will end with the adoption of the Constitution. All beyond that is experiment." This was long ago. But the Republic is an experiment no longer. It has been strained to the utmost along the very vital fibre of its frame, and it has emerged from the ordeal recreated. Happy the venerable historian, who has survived both to witness the triumph of the experiment, and to complete his stately story to the very point which he contemplated thirty years ago! He has reached what was then the horizon, and may a gracious Providence permit him yet to depict the new and further and radiant prospect which he and all his countrymen behold!

In achieving this great result has educated America been sluggish or sceptical or cowardly? The Constitution was but ten years old when the author of the Declaration of Independence, speaking with great authority

and for a great party, announced that the Constitution was a compact of which every State must judge for itself both the fact of violation and the mode of redress. Jefferson sowed dragon's teeth in the fresh soil of the young Union. He died, but the armed men appeared. The whole course of our politics for nearly a century was essentially revolutionary. Beneath all specific measures and party policies lay the supreme question of the nature of the government which Jefferson had raised. Is the Union a league or a nation? Are we built upon the solid earth or unstably encamped, like Sindbad's company, upon the back of a sea-monster which may dive at any moment? Until this doubt was settled there could be no peace. Yet the question lay in our politics only like the far black cloud along the horizon, flashing and muttering scarce heard thunders until the slavery agitation began. That was a debate which devoured every other, until the slave-power, foiled in the hope of continental empire, pleaded Jefferson's theory of the Constitution as an argument for national dissolution. This was the third great crisis of the country, and in the tremendous contention, as in the war that followed, was the American scholar recreant and dumb?

I do not ask, for it is not necessary, whether in the ranks of the powerful host that resisted agitation there were not scholars and educated men. I do not ask whether the educated or any other class alone maintained the fight, nor whether there were not unquailing leaders who were not educated men, nor whether all were first, or all approved the same methods, or all were equally wise or equally zealous. Of course, I make no

exclusive claim. I do not now speak of men like Garrison, whose name is that of a great patriot and a great human benefactor, and whose sturdy leadership was that of an old Hebrew prophet. But was the great battle fought and won while we and our guild stood passive and hostile by?

The slavery agitation began with the moral appeal, and as in the dawn of the Revolution educated America spoke in the bugle note of James Otis, so in the moral onset of the antislavery agitation rings out the clear voice of a son of Otis's college, himself the Otis of the later contest, Wendell Phillips. By his side, in the stormy dawn of the movement, stands a grandson of Quincy of the Revolution, and among the earliest antislavery leaders is more than a proportionate part of liberally educated men. In Congress the commanding voice for freedom was that of the most learned, experienced, and courageous of American statesmen, the voice of a scholar and an old college professor, John Quincy Adams. Whittier's burning words scattered the sacred fire, Longfellow and Lowell mingled their songs with his, and Emerson gave to the cause the loftiest scholarly heart in the Union. And while Parker's and Beecher's pulpits echoed Jonathan Mayhew's morning gun and fired words like cannon-balls, in the highest pulpit of America, foremost among the champions of liberty, stood the slight and radiant figure of the scholarly son of Rhode Island, upon whom more than upon any of her children the mantle of Roger Williams had worthily fallen, William Ellery Channing.

When the national debate was angriest, it was the

scholar of the Senate of the United States who held highest in his undaunted hands the flag of humanity and his country. While others bowed and bent and broke around him, the form of Charles Sumner towered erect. Commerce and trade, the mob of the clubs and of the street, hissed and sneered at him as a pedantic dreamer and fanatic. No kind of insult and defiance was spared. But the unbending scholar revealed to the haughty foe an antagonist as proud and resolute as itself. He supplied what the hour demanded, a sublime faith in liberty, the uncompromising spirit which interpreted the Constitution and the statutes for freedom and not for slavery. The fiery agitation became bloody battle. Still he strode on before. "I am only six weeks behind you," said Abraham Lincoln, the Western frontiersman, to the New England scholar; and along the path that the scholar blazed in the wild wilderness of civil war, the path of emancipation and the constitutional equality of all citizens, his country followed fast to union, peace, and prosperity. The public service of this scholar was not less than that of any of his predecessors or any of his contemporaries. Criticise him as you will, mark every shadow you can find,

> "Though round his base the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on his head."

It would indeed be a sorrowful confession for this day and this assembly, to own that experience proves the air of the college to be suffocating to generous thought and heroic action. Here it would be especially unjust, for what son of this college does not proudly

remember that when, in the Revolution, Rhode Island was the seat of war, the college boys left the recitation-room for the field, and the college became a soldiers' barrack and hospital? And what son of any college in the land, what educated American, does not recall with grateful pride that legion of college youth in our own day—"Integer vitæ scelerisque purus"—who were not cowards or sybarites because they were scholars, but whose consecration to the cause of country and man vindicated the words of John Milton, "A complete and generous education is that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war?" That is the praise of the American scholar. The glory of this day and of this Commencement season is that the pioneers, the courageous and independent leaders in public affairs, the great apostles of religious and civil liberty, have been, in large part, educated men, sustained by the sympathy of the educated class.

But this is not true of the past alone. As educated America was the constructive power, so it is still the true conservative force of the Republic. It is decried as priggish and theoretical. But so Richard Henry Lee condemned the Constitution as the work of visionaries. They are always called visionaries who hold that morality is stronger than a majority. Goldwin Smith says that Cobden felt that at heart England was a gentleman and not a bully. So thinks the educated American of his own country. He has faith enough in the people to appeal to them against themselves, for he knows that the cardinal condition of popular government is the

ability of the people to see and correct their own errors. In a Republic, as the majority must control action, the majority tends constantly to usurp control of opinion. Its decree is accepted as the standard of right and wrong. To differ is grotesque and eccentric. To protest is preposterous. To defy is incendiary and revolutionary. But just here interposes educated intelligence, and asserts the worth of self-reliance and the power of the individual. Gathering the wisdom of ages as into a sheaf of sunbeams, it shows that progress springs from the minority, and that if it will but stand fast time will give it victory.

It is the educated voice of the country which teaches patience in politics and strengthens the conscience of the individual citizen by showing that servility to a majority is as degrading as servility to a Sultan or a Grand Lama. Emerson said that of all his friends he honored none more than a quiet old Quaker lady who, if she said yea and the whole world said nay, still said yea. One of the pleasantest stories of Garfield is that of his speech to his constituents in which he quaintly vindicated his own independence. "I would do anything to win your regard," he said, "but there is one man whose good opinion I must have above all, and without whose approval I can do nothing. That is the man with whom I get up every morning and go to bed every night, whose thoughts are my thoughts, whose prayers are my prayers; I cannot buy your confidence at the cost of his respect." Never was the scholarly Garfield so truly a man, so patriotically an American, and his constituents were prouder than ever of their representative

who complimented them by asserting his own manhood.

It is the same voice which exposes the sophists who mislead the mob and pitilessly scourges the demagogues who flatter it. "All men know more than any man," haughtily shout the larger and lesser Talleyrands. That is a French epigram, replies the scholar, but not a general truth. A crowd is not wiser than the wisest man in it. For the purposes of the voyage the crew does not know more than the master of the ship. The Boston town-meeting was not more sagacious than Sam Adams. "Vox populi vox Dei," screams the foaming rhetoric of the stump; the voice of the people is the voice of God. The voice of the people in London, says history, declared against street-lamps and denounced inoculation as wanton wickedness. The voice of the people in Paris demanded the head of Charlotte Corday. The voice of the people in Jerusalem cried, "Away with Him! crucify Him! crucify Him!" "God is on the side of the strongest battalions," sneers the party swindler who buys a majority with money or place. On the contrary, answers the cool critic, reading history and interpreting its lessons, God was with Leonidas, and not with Xerxes. He was with the exile John Robinson at Leyden, not with Laud and the hierarchy at Westminster.

Despite Napoleon even battles are not sums in arithmetic. Strange that a general, half of whose success was due to a sentiment, the glory of France, which welded his army into a thunderbolt, and still burns for us in the fervid song of Béranger, should have supposed that it is numbers and not conviction and enthusiasm

which win the final victory. The career of no man in our time illustrates this truth more signally than Garibaldi's. He was the symbol of the sentiment which the wise Cavour moulded into a nation, and he will be always canonized more universally than any other Italian patriot, because no other represents so purely and simply to the national imagination the Italian ideal of patriotic devotion. His enthusiasm of conviction made no calculation of defeat, because while he could be baffled he could not be beaten. It was a stream flowing from a mountain height, which might be delayed or diverted, but knew instinctively that it must reach the sea. "*Italia farà da se.*" Garibaldi was that faith incarnate, and the prophecy is fulfilled. Italy, more proud than stricken, bears his bust to the Capitol, and there the eloquent marble will say while Rome endures, that one man with God, with country, with duty and conscience, is at last the majority.

But still further, it is educated citizenship which, while defining the rightful limitation of the power of the majority, is most loyal to its legitimate authority, and foremost always in rescuing it from the treachery of political pedlers and parasites. The rural statesmen who founded the Republic saw in vision a homogeneous and intelligent community, the peace and prosperity and intelligence of the State reflected in the virtue and wisdom of the government. But is this our actual America or a glimpse of Arcadia? Is this the United States or Plato's Republic or Harrington's Oceana or Sir Thomas More's Utopia? What are the political maxims of the hour? In Rome, do as the Romans do.

Fight fire with fire. Beat the devil with his own weapons. Take men as they are, and don't affect superior goodness. Beware of the politics of the moon and of Sunday-school statesmanship. This is our current political wisdom and the results are familiar. "This is a nasty State," cries the eager partisan, "and I hope we have done nasty work enough to carry it." "The conduct of the opposition," says another, "was infamous. They resorted to every kind of base and contemptible means, and, thank God, we have beaten them at their own game." The majority is overthrown by the political machinery intended to secure its will. The machinery is oiled by corruption and grinds the honest majority to powder. And it is educated citizenship, the wisdom and energy of men who are classed as prigs, pedants, and impracticables, which is first and most efficient in breaking the machine and releasing the majority. It was this which rescued New York from Tweed, and which everywhere challenges and demolishes a Tweed tyranny by whatever name it may be known.

Every year at the college Commencement the American scholar is exhorted to do his duty. But every newspaper proves that he is doing it. For he is the most practical politician who shows his fellow-citizens, as the wise old sailor told his shipmates, that "God has somehow so fixed the world that a man can afford to do about right." Take from the country at this moment the educated power, which is contemned as romantic and sentimental, and you would take from the army its general, from the ship its compass, from national action its moral mainspring. It is not the demagogue and the

shouting rabble; it is the people heeding the word of the thinker and the lesson of experience, which secures the welfare of the American republic and enlarges human liberty. If American scholarship is not in place, it is in power. If it does not carry the election to-day, it determines the policy of to-morrow. Calm, patient, confident, heroic, in our busy and material life it perpetually vindicates the truth that the things which are unseen are eternal. So in the cloudless midsummer sky serenely shines the moon, while the tumultuous ocean rolls and murmurs beneath, the type of illimitable and unbridled power; but, resistlessly marshalled by celestial laws, all the wild waters, heaving from pole to pole, rise and recede, obedient to the mild queen of heaven.

Brethren of Brown, we have come hither as our fathers came, as our children will come, to renew our observation of that celestial law; and here, upon the old altar of fervid faith and boundless anticipation, let us pledge ourselves once more that, as the courage and energy of educated men fired the morning gun and led the contest of the Revolution, founded and framed the Union and, purifying it as with fire, have maintained the national life to this hour, so, day by day, we will do our part to lift America above the slough of mercenary politics and the cunning snares of trade, steadily forward towards the shining heights which the hopes of its nativity foretold.

XIV

THE SPIRIT AND INFLUENCE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION

AN ADDRESS IN COMMEMORATION OF THE CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS, DELIVERED AT ALBANY, N. Y., JULY 8, 1884

The Centennial Anniversary of the establishment of the University of the State of New York was celebrated at the annual meeting of the Board of Regents of the University, at Albany, July 8, 1884.

Mr. Curtis had been a member of the Board since 1864.

THE SPIRIT AND INFLUENCE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION

THE great Puritan poet, addressing the great Puritan general, naturally recalled his famous fields of battle; but, contemplating other and different services to the State, he exclaimed:

> "While Darwent streams, with blood of Scots imbru'd,
> And Dunbar field resound thy praises loud,
> And Worcester's laureate wreath, yet much remains
> To conquer still: Peace hath her victories
> No less than those of War."

It is not the drum-beat nor the bugle-call, the proud clash of military music and the thunder of artillery, which now for many years have bidden us to the centennial commemorations of battles, that summon us today. Famous in war, the stately river upon whose banks we stand is not less renowned for its victories of peace. In the long contest of armed Europe during the eighteenth century for the control of the Western continent, as in the military strategy of the American Revolution, the Hudson River was still the prize. Upon the Hudson the great contest culminated and turned towards triumph. Upon the Hudson the desperate en-

deavor to seize by treachery what could not be gained by honorable force was foiled. Upon the Hudson the patriot army was disbanded, and from its mouth the defeated British army sailed away. But upon the banks of the Hudson, also, New York, one of the united colonies, constituted herself an independent State; upon the Hudson she ratified the Constitution of the United States, and upon the Hudson Washington was inaugurated and the national government began. Upon the Hudson Robert Fulton, with happy daring, freed the commerce of the world from dependence upon the fickle wind, and De Witt Clinton drew to its bosom the harvests of the Western prairies, and made it the highway of commercial empire, as nature had made it the path of military power. Thus associated with great and beneficent events, the rejoicing river, which its discoverer hoped might be a shorter passage to the spiced and golden East, flows through a region fairer than fabled Cathay, teeming with busy people, humming with various industry, its spacious valley the home of, perhaps, greater happiness, intelligence, and prosperity than the valley of any other river in the world. It is to the shore of this historic stream, still murmuring with the music of the centennial commemoration of victories of the war, that we come to celebrate the centenary of an event hardly less significant, the first great victory of the peace that followed the war, the organization of the system of education in New York.

Nothing in the American Union, with all its homogeneity, is more striking than the differences of its

communities, which speak the same language, share the same religious faith, cherish the same national traditions, which are welded together by every tie of blood and common interest, and which only nominal and invisible bounds divide. With all this intimate and indissoluble union, a certain individual character and spirit, a certain tone in the speech, a form of phrase, a peculiarity of temperament, a local tradition and pride, a thousand details which instantly and unerringly distinguish one community from another, are as obvious as the general resemblance and the national sympathy. It is this vigor and raciness of local life which assure the united power and the common prosperity, by instinctively repelling all extreme and dangerous consolidation. Those who fear a perilous political centralization and overthrow of local rights and government by national legislation and judicial construction forget the political genius of the English race, from which we are chiefly sprung, and the tradition of the American people. Americans will never confound the necessary conditions of national union with centralized empire, and the first serious effort to change the essential basis of that union, which is local feeling and local self-government, would be the last.

Between no neighboring communities in the country is the local difference more pronounced than between New York and New England, which, practically, the Hudson River divides. It begins with the European settlement of each, and in nothing is it more striking than in the early interest in education. The most powerful motive for the foundation of a State, the desire

to enjoy religious and civil liberty, was the impulse of both branches of the New England emigration. But men and women who are courageous and enduring enough to leave a tyrannical State, are not necessarily wise and persistent enough to found a free and progressive commonwealth; and the significant fact in the settlement of New England, and the key of its dominating influence upon the continent, are not only that it was effected by strong and sturdy devotees, who felt religious freedom in a savage wilderness to be more precious than the sweet and sacred charm of an ancient and historic home, but that the emigration was led by educated men. The Puritan flight from England to Amsterdam and Leyden, from Delft Haven to Plymouth, and the later voyage to Salem and Boston, was the going forth of a church and a school, a mighty march from the old world and the old age to the new world and the new age by scholars and divines; and as in the university the Reformation arose to organize modern Europe, from the university also came the creative impulse and the moral energy which have chiefly directed American civilization. It was moral energy —with a thousand limitations, indeed, but directed by educated intelligence—which planted New England; and on this happy centenary we can recall no more significant fact than that the seal of the university, that is, of highly educated leadership, is impressed upon the very beginning of our national development.

And that the university should have been the nursery of colonial America is not surprising. The controlling American movement sprang from the Reformation. It

sought freedom of worship for itself; and as religious progress in the old world was the child of the university, it is to the university that we owe civil liberty in the new world. Wickliffe, John Huss, Jerome of Prague, and Luther; all the leaders of the new learning in England, Colet, Erasmus, Sir Thomas More; all the fathers of the Reformation—spoke from the university. In the university alone could the high argument between the Roman Church and the human mind be comprehended and maintained, and there the debate between power and liberty, between alleged spiritual authority and sacred tradition and the instinctive and inherent sovereignty of the individual mind, ended in the happy emancipation of modern civilization from mediæval slavery. In America that emancipation was accomplished. The university was the school of the clergy, the clergy were the leaders of the people. Roger Williams, a clergyman, a graduate of English Cambridge, first in America and in the world, declared the fundamental principle of political and religious freedom, the principle of soul-liberty, and the absolute separation of Church and State. From Jonathan Mayhew's pulpit flashed the morning gun of the American Revolution. The university emancipated the human mind, and of that emancipation the triumphant American Republic is the most glorious result.

As the university was the asylum of liberty in the earlier modern epoch, so in no great modern State has the university been merely a pensioned parasite. It has been rather the well-spring of national life and the foe of tyranny. When Metternich was Austria, he dis-

trusted nothing so much as the university, and Russia quails before it to-day as a mighty masked battery of liberty. When Prussia fell at Jena, the greatest statesman of his time, Baron Stein, whom Napoleon feared more than he feared an army, founded the University of Berlin in the hope to arouse a spirit of patriotism powerful enough to revive a crushed and prostrate nation and to stay the overwhelming Napoleonic despotism. By the enthusiasm of her people Prussia was nationally redeemed, and no redeeming impulse was more effective than that of the university. When I heard its lectures thirty years ago, it was but one of the nineteen universities of Germany, but it had a hundred and fifty professors and four thousand students, and the nineteen universities were the nineteen most dangerous and untiring foes of monarchial reaction and of the Holy Alliance of despots.

The American colonial colleges were generally founded or, at least, fostered by graduates of English Cambridge and Oxford, and chiefly by Cambridge men. Many of the teachers were of the same universities, and the courses of study and the general discipline were patterned on those in the colleges of the mother institutions. The chief difference of method lay in the conferring of degrees, which at Oxford and Cambridge was the especial function of the university and not of the college. During the colonial period there were nine colleges in the country: Harvard, founded in 1636, being the oldest, and Rutgers, in 1771, at the very beginning of the Revolution, the youngest. But most of them were poor and puny. William and Mary, the second in the

list and the mother of the oldest of college Greek-letter societies, the Phi Beta Kappa, had no authority to grant degrees, and in 1730 it was little better than a boarding-school. One of its own fellows described it as "a college without a chapel, without a scholarship, and without a statute, a library without books, a president without a fixed salary, and a burgess without electors." The young Virginia planter owed little to the Virginia college. He was taught by the domestic chaplain or, if a better education were sought, he was sent to the Northern colonies or to England. It was in New England, naturally, that the most efficient colleges were found, for they all sprang from the same devoted and sturdy spirit that had established Harvard. The legend of Dartmouth, the eighth college founded in the country, was *vox clamantis in deserto.* And upon the solitary shores of the upper Connecticut, in 1769, where still the wild-cat cried in the thicket and the wolf hovered about the farm, and the rigors of the climate and the exposure of the frontier were little relieved, a college devoted to the higher education might well call itself a voice crying in the wilderness. But the character that heeded the voice, the impulse which founded and sustained the college, the feeling which years afterwards bred in the heart of Daniel Webster's father the purpose to send his son thither, and which nourished in the son's breast the desire to go—this loyalty to knowledge as a source of power, and to intellectual training as the means of its effective exercise—is one of the proudest instincts of human nature, and one of the vital sources of Ameri-

can greatness. Never was Webster manlier, never was his eloquence purer, than when, in his famous argument in the Dartmouth College case, which established one of the great beacons of our jurisprudence, he said, overpowered by generous emotion, his eyes tearful and his voice faltering, "Sir, it is a small college, but there are those that love it."

The spirit which the colonial colleges fostered was a large and liberalizing spirit, true to the historic university tradition, and naturally, therefore, these colleges produced the champions and the chiefs of the political revolution. As schools of education strictly, they were as effective as the colleges of the half-century after the Revolution; but they imparted a training, also, as the result proved, which conformed to Milton's familiar requirement and to the wisdom of Wolfe, the pupil of Melanchthon, that to understand Latin and Greek is not learning in itself, but the entrance-hall and ante-chamber of learning. During the colonial period the number of college graduates was always small. The whole number that was graduated at Kings College, in New York, from its first commencement, in 1758, to the day when it closed its doors in the Revolution, was not more than a hundred. But a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. The Oriental tradition said that a shred of ambergris flavored the sultan's cup for a thousand years. There were great colonial leaders who were not college-bred, for, indeed, the university does not monopolize the virtues and the moral graces, nor sequester for its own children genius and wisdom and statesmanship and

common-sense. Washington and Franklin and Abraham Lincoln were not college men, and greater service than theirs to their country and to mankind can no man render. Does it follow that the service of Samuel Adams and John Adams, of James Otis and James Madison, of John Jay and Alexander Hamilton, would have been greater, or as great, without the mental discipline and the wisdom which come from enlarged and illuminating knowledge of human affairs, which it is the purpose of the university to impart? Because the genius of Shakespeare asks nothing of the schools, shall the schools be closed? Because original and controlling intellectual power cannot be imparted by education, shall it not be fostered and disciplined, directed, stimulated, and restrained, by the wisdom of all the ages and the experience of mankind? Abraham Lincoln was not college-bred. But Abraham Lincoln, lying before the fire of pine knots that he might read his book, was inspired by that lofty desire to lift his mind into

"An ampler ether, a diviner air,"

which is the demand for the utmost knowledge, the completest mental and moral discipline—the instinct from which the university springs.

Into this realm of the higher education New York, a trading colony with a population of various nationalities, was slow to enter, and it was not until one hundred and twenty years after the settlement that a college was founded. The chief citizens of the colony were merchants, and their sons passed from the grammar-school to the counting-house and to the West In-

dia Islands. The first historian of New York, Chief Justice Smith, says that for many years he and the deputy judges were the only college graduates, except the clergy of the English Church; and in 1746, the year in which a law was passed authorizing a lottery to provide money to found a college, he knew but thirteen graduates in the province, and all of them young men. The historian draws a sorrowful picture of the condition of education. He praises warmly the charms of his lovely countrywomen, but he admits that there is nothing that they so generally neglect as reading; that the schools are of the lowest order, the instructors wanting instruction, the common speech extremely corrupted, and bad taste everywhere evident in public and private proceedings.

There was naturally a feeling of shame in the province that the English universities and the colleges of New England should educate the young New-Yorker, and, although with evident doubt and difficulty, at length, in 1751, the money was raised, and after some vigorous discussion and opposition lest the new institution should fall under sectarian control, the college was chartered as Kings College in 1754. It was a memorable epoch in our history. In June of that year the Albany Congress assembled, in which Dr. Franklin proposed his plan of colonial union, and in the same year the French built Fort Duquesne, upon the present site of Pittsburg, in Pennsylvania. The next year or two, while the college president was teaching his dozen pupils, were the years of the French expulsion from Nova Scotia, of Washington's march to Fort Duquesne, and

of Braddock's defeat; of the vain attack of Sir William Johnson upon Crown Point, and of the opening contest for the American continent between France and England, which was to end upon the Heights of Abraham. Frederick the Great was conquering in Germany; Robert Clive was subduing and stripping India; and William Pitt, as Prime Minister of England, held the mighty thunderbolts of Britain in his hand, and every day broke with the flash and the thunder of British victory.

This was the moment when Kings College opened its modest doors in the little town of ten thousand inhabitants at the mouth of the Hudson, and it is curious to contrast its beginning and development with the University of Göttingen in Germany, which the same King George II.—from whom the New York college took its name—had founded twenty years before in a smaller town in another part of his dominions. Towards the end of the century, Göttingen was the most brilliant university in Europe for the eminence of its teachers and the variety and value of its lectures. In less than a hundred years from its foundation it counted three thousand students, eighty-nine professors, and among them some of the most famous scholars in the world, a library of three hundred thousand volumes and five thousand manuscripts, and even now the town of Göttingen has but eighteen thousand inhabitants. The American college, when it had completed its first century, in a town which had grown from ten thousand to six hundred thousand inhabitants, showed by its catalogue one hundred and forty students and six professors.

Yet such meagre figures are not the measure of its

splendid service. In the twenty years from its foundation in 1754 to the beginning of the Revolutionary war, as I have said, only one hundred students graduated from Kings College. But they were an army in themselves. The college in those creative days, when a great nation was to be born and great historic events to be achieved, trained men for leaders. It graduated scholars less apt to edit Greek plays than to make American history. It produced men of courage, insight, and tenacity, who had learned from literature and the annals of all ages the resources of liberty and the sophistries of power. They were scholars of the world, not of the cloister. Their degrees admitted them *ad eundem* with Pym and Milton, with Eliot and John Hampden. However reactionary the officers of the college, John Jay and Robert Livingston, Gouverneur Morris and Egbert Benson, Philip Van Cortlandt and Henry Rutgers, with others of not less illustrious family names in New York, were educated Sons of Liberty, and in all the advancing life of the province they were the conspicuous leaders. And when the Tory president, Dr. Cooper, a former fellow of Oxford, entered the lists for the British government, he was vanquished by a masked antagonist from under whose visor, when it was lifted, looked the face of the marvellous boy, Alexander Hamilton, then a youth of eighteen and a freshman of the college.

Thus, as the university had guided the controlling emigration to the country, and had fostered and directed the instinct of nationality, so also it supplied the leadership for national independence. As the debate passed from sermon and pamphlet and argument in

courts of law, from the town-meeting and the caucus and the committee of correspondence, to the march of armies and the battle-field, the colleges closed their doors indeed, but not until the statesmen of the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention had passed out of them. When the war ended, and the united colonies, loosely huddled in a chaotic confederation, were to be bound in a flexible, powerful, and harmonious national union, once more the colleges furnished the builders of the State, and of the fifty-five members of the Constitutional Convention, thirty-three were graduates. When the Convention adjourned, Columbia and Princeton united in Hamilton, Jay, and Madison to present to the country the great argument for the Constitution, and it was Alexander Hamilton, a son of Columbia, who lifted New York into the Union, and a son of Princeton, James Madison, who placed Virginia by her side.

These are facts to be proudly remembered and emphasized upon this occasion and in this place, because there is a common and cheap depreciation of the college, as if it were a nursery of dainty feebleness or useless pedantry, from which a vigorous manhood cannot be expected to issue. Indeed, it has become a familiar sneer against every endeavor for purer politics and a higher political morality that it is favored by college-bred men, as if trained intelligence, intellectual expansion, and moral elevation were less fitted to deal with questions of the public welfare than the venal huckstering which makes politics a trade, and the political ignorance which thrives upon political corruption. The re-

mark addressed by his panegyrist to Governor Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island may be truly applied to the colonial colleges: "Much might be said of your Honor's superior abilities in mathematics and natural philosophy," but above them all the panegyrist counts "your wise government of a people."

It was a just and commanding instinct which prompted the leaders of New York, when the Revolution ended, to lay the broad foundation of a system of education for the State which should tend to cherish the intelligent patriotism and public virtue which had secured American independence. Education throughout the State had been paralyzed by the war. The schools were everywhere closed. The one college was practically extinct. But, in the year after the negotiation of the treaty which recognized the final separation of the American States from Great Britain, Governor George Clinton invited the legislature to consider the question of the revival and encouragement of seminaries of learning. He was not a college-bred man, but he was a wise statesman and one of the great governors of New York; and in the first confused and dark hour that followed the war he felt, perhaps vaguely and remotely, but surely, the necessity of opposing to the money-making spirit, which was certain powerfully to assert its supremacy, the spirit of letters and art. It is pleasant to think of the sturdy governor in the capital city, in whose half-charred and neglected streets the trees had been cut down and the ruined buildings had been left unrestored, and from whose shores the long-occupying and devastating foreign army had just marched away,

pleading that not Tyre and Sidon, not Carthage and Capua, should be the model of the new State, but Athens, rather—

> "Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
> And eloquence."

"Neglect of the education of youth," were Clinton's memorable words in his message to the Legislature of January 21, 1784, "is among the evils consequent on war. Perhaps there is scarce anything more worthy your attention than the revival and encouragement of seminaries of learning, and nothing by which we can more satisfactorily express our gratitude to the Supreme Being for his past favors, since piety and virtue are generally the offspring of an enlightened understanding." The Legislature did not shrink from declaring the duty which the governor urged of forming the minds of the youth of the State to virtue, and from this noble purpose of promoting public virtue and consequent public usefulness sprang the University of the State of New York.

With the English practical genius and tendency to adapt existing institutions to the actual situation rather than to attempt a wholly new system of education, the first proposition was to revive Kings College as the nucleus of a university, to be composed of all colleges that might arise in the State, the combined institution to be governed and controlled by the regents of the University who were created by the act. This act practically violated the charter of old Kings College and sequestered to the State its property; nor was it improved by

an amendment giving to the clergy of each denomination the right of representation in the University regency. Practically, also, it committed all the details of the management of the college to the regents. Not only were they to employ the professors and pay their salaries, and to prescribe a system of discipline for the students, but they were to repair the college buildings, and to make the porter's lodge comfortable, and to pay the messenger eighteen pounds per annum, and to take care that the floor-scrubbers were diligent, and to procure a bell for the college, and to direct the purchase of four cords of wood annually, and to defray the expense thereof from the treasury of the University. The minutes of the meetings of the regents, in the days of this simple service, show how impracticable the scheme would become as the University developed, but the minutes have other passages, also, which command attention.

On the 17th of May, 1784, a hundred years ago, the first candidate for admission to the University, in its only existing college, presented himself to the Board of Education. His name was De Witt Clinton. His uncle George, the governor, was the Chancellor of the University; his father, General James Clinton, was a regent of the University; and his son, George W. Clinton, is today the Vice-Chancellor of the University, honored and beloved. During the century no name is more illustrious in the annals of New York than that of Clinton—hereditary honors and hereditary esteem springing, as becomes a republic, from hereditary merit. The next two candidates who presented themselves for admission were Philip and George Livingston, sons of Philip Liv-

ingston, who came to study where their famous kinsman, Robert R. Livingston, the Chancellor of the State, studied; for then the families most conspicuous in the public service of the State and country were associated with the College and the University, while the Board of Regents itself comprised some of the most eminent men in the State. But serious defects in the law constantly disclosed themselves, and especially it was seen that it would be impossible for a single board to have charge of the government, direction, and funds of many colleges widely dispersed through the State; and on the 31st of January, 1787, a committee, of which Hamilton, Jay, Livingston, Mason, Rogers, Clarkson, and Duane were members, was appointed to report upon the condition and prospects of the University. On the 16th of February the committee submitted a report recommending fundamental changes in the organization of the University. They proposed the appointment of a distinct corporation for every college, and the establishment of a system of academies throughout the State, and that both colleges and academies should be placed under a wise and salutary subordination to the Board of Regents. On the 15th of March, Hamilton submitted a bill to be laid before the Legislature, which, on the 13th of April, 1787, by the approval of the Council of Revision, became a law, and is the final form of the act creating the University.

To the greatest constructive genius in our political history, that of Alexander Hamilton, New York owes the system of its higher education. But it is remarkable that when it was designed there was but one mori-

bund college, and no academy or public school, in the State. It was through the prescience of genius that Hamilton knew that the one would produce the other, and six years after the passage of his act the Board of Regents recommended the establishment of primary schools, and two years afterwards Governor Clinton urged the establishment of common schools throughout the State; and that vast and beneficent system of public instruction began which fills the air from Montauk to Niagara, and from the Adirondacks to Pennsylvania, with the daily music of the free-school bell, and covers imperial New York with thousands of school-houses, thronged with more than a million of scholars, maintained at an annual cost of twelve millions of dollars; the nurseries of the general education which is the bulwark and the defence of patriotism, liberty, and law, and which, in the spirit of Hamilton's provision, which abolished all religious tests for the presidency or professorships in any college or academy under the visitation of the regents, please God, no partisan or sectarian hand shall ever touch.

But while New York, at the close of the Revolution, was founding her system of general education under the name of the University of New York, one of the oldest and most famous schools of Europe, the University of Paris, which in the thirteenth century was thronged with thirty thousand students, was overwhelmed in the maelstrom of the French Revolution. In 1793, the year in which the Board of Regents in New York recommended the establishment of primary schools, the schools and the University were suppressed in France; and in 1795, the year in which George Clinton impelled

the Legislature to make an appropriation in aid of common schools in New York, a new school system was vainly attempted in France. In 1808, twenty years after the establishment of the University of New York, the Emperor Napoleon founded a system of secondary schools, with twenty-seven university centres in the chief towns of the country, each with its local government, and all together forming the University of France, which absorbed the entire system of public instruction. No school was allowed to exist without its authority, no teacher could instruct except he were a graduate. In 1850, after the revolution of 1848, the exclusive privilege of the University was abolished, but its general system remained. It is, in substance, the scheme of Hamilton, carried out by a despot with immense resources and under different national circumstances. But Hamilton had the same imperial instinct. His law authorized the regents to visit and inspect all the colleges, academies, and schools which are or may be established in the State, to examine thoroughly their education and discipline, and yearly to report their condition to the Legislature. His purpose was plain and it was characteristic. Under the name of University he meant to include the whole system of education in the State, and to give it the vitality and vigor which result from local government under a strong central supremacy.

The common-school system which the regents first suggested was not committed to their direction. But its rapid growth and wide development showed how closely adapted it was to the wishes and tastes of the

people of the State. In fifty years from the first act which appropriated money for the schools there were nearly eleven thousand school districts and more than six hundred thousand pupils, and the movement for the freedom of the schools had already begun. In the same time five colleges had been chartered, but none of them with affluent or even adequate revenues, and the regents of the University were devoted chiefly to the care of the academies. There are now twenty-two colleges in the State, but the academies have been the chief care of the regents. The design of Hamilton, as inferred from the Act of 1787, has never been fulfilled. He conceived, doubtless, an institution which should be an active and intimate fraternity of all the colleges and academies of the State, as Oxford University is composed of the colleges in the city of Oxford. In that city—

"Ye distant spires! Ye antique towers!"—

there are twenty-four colleges, each with an independent corporate organization. But there is one life, one pride, one fame among them all. There may be Magdalen and Brazen Nose, Merton and Oriel, Christ-church and All-Souls, but they are all Oxford. It is Oxford which is the school of mediæval tradition; Oxford which is the fond recollection of her sons of any college; Oxford which is one of the twin scholastic glories of England. The members of every college are familiar with those of every other. Recruits from every college pull for the honor of Oxford against the picked crew of the rival university. One form of faith unites them all, and it is Oxford that sends a member to Parliament.

Is this a situation paralleled in our University? Alfred is practically as remote from St. John's, Columbia from Madison, Ingham from Cornell, as Dartmouth from Brown or Princeton from Harvard. They are separate in religious faith and academic discipline, and the fact that they are grouped together as colleges of the University of the State gives them no more essential unity of academic life than it gives them actual neighborhood. Do the boys of Columbia, of Union, of Cornell, of Hamilton, of Rochester, of Madison, of Syracuse, or Hobart shout and sing to the glory of the University or to that of their own *alma mater* in her own chosen melody? The regents of the University, indeed, share with the Legislature the authority to grant charters to colleges, and to annul them whenever it shall appear that the endowment has not been legally paid; and the colleges report to the regents their condition and the disposition of their funds. But their supervision is ceremonial and perfunctory, not vital and authoritative. The Board of Regents has no directing power over the colleges. It cannot control their instruction or discipline, and there is little community of life or interest or association among the colleges themselves. How many of them have adopted even the modest suggestion of the late Chancellor Benedict, that they should place a head-line on the title-pages of their catalogues, stating that they were colleges of the University? Each prescribes its own course of study and confers its own degrees, without reference to the University. They are friends, indeed, inspired by a generous emulation. In the convocation each college bears its part with ability

and courtesy and grace. But each is conscious that it is a law to itself, that there is no supreme, superior authority to which it must defer. The convocation is the arena of delightful and valuable discussion. But it is a confederation of sovereigns, not a national union.

Hamilton, however, no more designed a scholastic than a political confederation, and undoubtedly the University of New York is not what he foresaw. It is but a pleasant and unnecessary fiction that it is a kind of American Oxford. It is a fiction because there is no vital resemblance between the institutions. It is pleasant because of the association with the venerable English school. It is unnecessary, because the University of New York has a distinct and dignified and beneficent character and function of its own. That function, during the century, has been twofold—it has been both direct and representative. The foundation of the University marks the establishment of a system of education extending from the common schools to the colleges, and in this system it has fulfilled an illustrious part as the official intermediary of the secondary or higher schools, chartering academies and colleges, receiving their reports, providing for the teaching of teachers, conducting a vast and progressive scheme of examinations to determine a suitable grade of academic studies and to adjust the ratio in which the bounty of the State shall be distributed, and, finally, responsibly supervising the State Library, now of more than one hundred and twenty thousand volumes, and the State Museum of Natural History, renowned for its paleontological treasures. This is a service of complex and infinite detail, requiring in-

cessant attention, the utmost promptness and accuracy, signal administrative ability, and a wise and comprehensive direction. It is, therefore, with just pride that the regents may truly say, upon their first centenary, that this ancient and most important trust of the service of the State has been discharged with a fidelity, an efficiency, and an economy which I will not say are unequalled, but which are certainly unsurpassed in any department of the State government. The annual appropriation for the regents is but nine thousand dollars. There are no salaries paid except for those of the office, for actual work, and every dollar of the regents' appropriation stands for a full hundred cents' worth of effective service. Modest, unostentatious, in the best sense conservative, and devoted to a lofty and ennobling duty, it is not without reason that the members of the Board of Regents are selected for their unpaid service with an impressive and dignified ceremonial, and that the State chooses to appoint her representatives and guardians of the interests of higher education in the commonwealth with the same solemnity with which she selects her senators in the national legislature. It was with the same sense of fitness that some of the regents, in days somewhat more formal than these, caused the church-bells to be rung to announce their entrance into a town to visit the academy, that the mind of youth might be impressed with a due sense of the dignity of these representatives of the State interest in academic education. The praise of the efficient work that I have described belongs mainly to the administrative officers of the Board at the capital of the State, of whom the secretary is the executive

agent, and in nothing is the State of New York more fortunate than in the character and ability of the eleven gentlemen who, during the century, have held the office of Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Board of Regents of the University. Had every office in the State been filled with the same single regard to personal character and especial fitness, the annals of New York would seem to be those of Sir Thomas More's well-ordered Utopia or Plato's ideal republic.

This is the first of the great services of the Board of Regents of the University, and of this service there has been no intelligent denial. The poet Halleck, indeed, in some good-natured verses long ago gently derided the disproportion between the pomp of the appointment of the regents and the nature of their duty, of which, however, he knew little; and there have been suggestions in the Legislature, and especially in the Constitutional Convention of 1867, that the relations of the State to education should be intrusted to a single direction, and not divided, as now, between the Board of Regents and the Department of Public Instruction. But to this view, however correct it might be in theory, as also to the other proposition, that the Department of Public Instruction in the Common Schools should be a bureau in the University Board, or the counter suggestion that the trust of the University Board should be transferred to the Common School Department, it has been always strongly objected that nothing could be more unwise than to change a traditional system which is at once so effective and so economical. This reply has seemed to be so reasonable in itself and the light of more general

and intimate knowledge of the services of the Board, that this ancient institution was never more firmly fixed in the public confidence and regard than it is to-day upon the happy completion of its centennial anniversary.

The second great service of the University is not measurable like the first by statistics and details. It is a service of moral influence, of intellectual elevation. For the University of the State of New York is the perpetual witness of the imperial commonwealth to the profound truth of George Clinton's words, that "piety and virtue are generally the offspring of an enlightened understanding." It is the continuing declaration of the State that the higher education promotes a higher national and local life, that colleges and academies are not roots of feebleness, but sources of strength, and that there is no more insidious enemy of free, popular institutions than the man who derides trained and educated intelligence. If in other countries what the State honors the people honor because they are accustomed to be led by the government, in this country what the State honors the people honor because they are the government. They know that neither the college, the academy, nor the common school, the counting-room, the work-shop, or the caucus, can do more than inspire, develop, and regulate innate powers and disposition. But they have learned—for their own history teaches it—that the youth who earnestly desire the knowledge and the training which the college supplies are those who become men that the country wants; and they plainly see and gladly own that no community can serve its own best and highest interest more effectively than by providing

amply and worthily for the utmost possible development and discipline of the moral and intellectual powers with which it is endowed.

This loyalty to the mere name of the higher education is one of the most significant facts in our national life. President Barnard, of Columbia College, an authority on the subject without a superior, five years ago estimated the whole number of colleges in the country to be four hundred and twenty-five, or one to a little more than one hundred thousand of the population. The whole number of students he computed to be one to twenty-five hundred of the population, while half a century ago it was about one student to two thousand inhabitants. Many of these colleges are but enterprises of private speculation, many are but little more than well-meaning high-schools, and very few of them can be called in any true sense universities. But they show the instinctive loyalty of the people to the idea of a liberal and comprehensive education. They attest the national consciousness that the word "college" stands for a great and noble public influence. Take from the country the educated force, in all its degrees, which these institutions represent; reduce the standard of education to reading, writing, and the elementary rules of arithmetic; banish the literature of England, Germany, France, Italy, of Greece and Rome, their philosophy, their art, the story of their political and social development, and the record of the progressive march of liberty through different ages and in widely varying institutions; seal up again the marvellous arcana of science with which modern genius has so bountifully blessed the world;

assume that the common school, fundamental and beneficent and indispensable as it is, furnishes all that the American citizen needs to know; and implant, if you can, in the American mind profound distrust of the counsels of highly educated men — would you have blessed or cursed the land? Would you have given the national mind higher moral elevation or greater practical power? Would the national character be purer, stronger, better? It is the inestimable blessing of this annual commencement season that it summons us from the absorbing and unsparing competitions of trade, from the furious passions of political controversy, from the heat and fret and toil of daily life, up, up, to the mount of vision, to meditate the divine decrees, and to behold clearly the truth that it is not riches nor empire nor enterprise, nor any form whatever of material prosperity, but unbending fidelity to the moral law written upon the consciousness of every citizen, which is the sure foundation of great and enduring States, and which, while it remains unshaken and supreme, will forever renew the American republic as the celestial order of nature renews the glory of midsummer.

Mr. Chancellor, the men of a hundred years ago, from whose hands we have received the great trust which we administer, long since have passed away, and our descending footsteps follow theirs. The exigencies of those times, not less than of ours, demanded wisdom, abounding knowledge, devoted patriotism, moral energy, and from the desire and purpose to provide and perpetuate these primary social forces this institution sprang. So, likewise, those who follow us, and who, a hundred

years hence, as now we recall our predecessors, shall recall us—let us hope not altogether as unfaithful—will find that the same spirit and influence and power which moulded and marshalled the controlling American emigration, which conducted the prodigious colonial debate with Great Britain, which fostered in the American heart the demand, and secured from the British crown the acknowledgment, of national independence, which raised the States from the shifting sands of confederation to the eternal rock of national union, and which in subsequent days, dealing with tremendous national controversies as they arose, gave the land peace with freedom, are the forces which alone can cope successfully with the vast questions that are arising before us—the humane and supreme forces of intellectual training, of copious knowledge, and of inflexible morality, which are represented by the University of the State of New York.

XV

THE PURITAN SPIRIT

AN ORATION DELIVERED AT THE UNVEILING OF THE PILGRIM STATUE BY THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY, IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, AT CENTRAL PARK, JUNE 6, 1885

The heroic bronze statue of the Pilgrim was unveiled and presented to the city of New York on Saturday afternoon, June 6, 1885.

It is placed in Central Park upon a gentle eminence, at the junction of the Grand Drive with the entrance from Seventy-second Street, on the east side of the Park. The statue faces the west. It is nine feet high, and stands upon a pedestal of Quincy granite, three feet high, which was designed by Mr. Richard Hunt.

The figure represents a Puritan of the early part of the seventeenth century, dressed in the severe garb of his sect, standing erect and looking into the distance with earnest, searching gaze. One arm falls at his side; the other rests on the muzzle of his old flint-lock musket. He wears the tall, broad-brimmed Puritan hat. The statue was modelled by Mr. J. Q. A. Ward.

THE PURITAN SPIRIT

TO-DAY and here we, who are children of New England, have but one thought, the Puritan; one pride and joy, the Puritan story. The transcendent story, in its larger relations, involving the whole modern development and diffusion and organization of English liberty, touched into romance by the glowing imagination, is proudly repeated by every successive generation of the English-speaking race, and lives and breathes and burns in legend and in song. In its greatest incident, the Pilgrim emigration to America, it is a story of achievement unparalleled in the annals of the world for the majesty of its purpose and the poverty of its means, the weakness of the beginning and the grandeur of the result. Contemplating the unnoted and hasty flight by night of a few Englishmen from the lonely coast of Lincolnshire to Holland—the peaceful life in exile—the perilous ocean-voyage afterwards, lest in that friendly land the fervor of the true faith should fail—the frail settlement at Plymouth, a shred of the most intense and tenacious life in Europe floating over the sea and clinging to the bleak edge of America, harassed by Indians, beset by beasts, by disease, by exposure, by death in every form,

beyond civilization and succor, beyond the knowledge or interest of mankind, a thin thread of the Old World by which incalculable destinies of the New World hung, yet taking such vital hold that it swiftly overspreads and dominates a continent covered to-day with a population more industrious, more intelligent, happier, man for man, than any people upon which the sun ever shone—contemplating this spectacle, our exulting hearts break into the language which was most familiar to the lips of the Pilgrims—a pæan of triumph, a proud prophecy accomplished—"The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation."

Here, indeed, we are far from the scenes most familiar to the eyes of the Pilgrims; we are surrounded by other traditions and solicited by other memories. But under these radiant heavens, amid this abounding beauty of summer, our hearts go backward to a winter day. The roaring city sinks to a silent wilderness. These flower-fringed lawns become a barren shore. This animated throng, changed to a grave-faced group in sombre garb, scans wistfully the solitary waste. The contrast is complete. All, all is changed. But no, not all. Unchanged as the eternal sky above us is the moral law which they revered. Unfailing as the sure succession of the seasons is its operation in the affairs of men. All the prosperity, the power, the permanence of the republic, more than ever the pride of its children, more than ever the hope of mankind, rest upon obedience to that unchanged and unchangeable law. The essence of the Fathers' faith is still the elixir of the children's life;

and should that faith decay, should the consciousness of a divine energy underlying human society, manifested in just and equal laws, and humanely ordering individual relations, disappear, the murmur of the ocean rising and falling upon Plymouth Rock would be the endless lament of nature over the baffled hopes of man.

Undoubtedly New England, in all its aspects of scenery and people, in its history and achievement, its energy, intelligence, sagacity, industry, and thrift — New England of the church, the school, and the town-meeting, is still the great, peculiar monument of the Puritan in America. But where beyond its borders more fitly than here, upon this ground settled by children of the hospitable country which was the first refuge of the Puritan, could a memorial statue stand? In England "they had heard that in the Low Countries was freedom of worship for all men," and thither the Pilgrims first fled; and when from that pleasant haven they resolved to cross the sea, they brought with them from Holland the free church and the free school, and unconsciously, in their principles and the practice of their religious organization, the free State. They were urged by a trading company in Amsterdam to settle under Dutch protection here in New Netherlands. But yet, although they courteously declined, when after sixty-four days' tossing upon the ocean they saw the desolate sands of Cape Cod, they resolved to stand towards the south, "to find some place about the Hudson River for their habitation." They turned again, however, to the bleaker shore. The Fathers did not come. But

long afterwards the children came, and are continually coming, to renew the ancient friendship.

Well may the statue of the Puritan stand here, for in the mighty miracle of the scene around us his hand, too, has wrought. Here upon this teeming island the children of New Netherlands and of New England have together built the metropolis of the continent, the far-shining monument of their united energy, enterprise, and skill. Together at the head of yonder river, richer in romance and legend than any other American stream, the Puritan and the Hollander with their associate colonists meditated the American Union. Together in this city, in the Stamp-Act Congress, they defied the power of Great Britain; and once more, upon the Hudson, the Puritan and the Cavalier and the Hollander, born again as Americans, resistlessly enveloped and overwhelmed the army of Burgoyne, and in his surrender beheld the end of British authority in the colonies. Here, then, shall the statue stand, imperishable memorial of imperishable friendship, blending the heroic memories of two worlds and two epochs;—the soldier of the Netherlands, the soldier of Old England, and the soldier of New England, at different times and under different conditions, but with the same unconquerable enthusiasm and courage, battling for liberty.

The spirit which is personified in this statue had never a completer expression than in the Puritan, but it is far older than he. Beyond Plymouth and Leyden, beyond the manor-house of Scrooby and the dim shore of the Humber, before Wickliffe and the German reformers, on heaven-kissing pastures of the everlasting Alps, on

the bright shores of the Medicean Arno, in the Roman forum, in the golden day of Athens of the violet crown, wherever the human heart has beat for liberty and the human consciousness has vaguely quickened with its divine birthright, wherever the instinct of freedom challenges authority and demands the reason no less than the poetry of tradition—there, there, whatever the age, whatever the country, the man, the costume, there is the invincible spirit of the Puritan.

But the vague and general aspiration for liberty took the distinctive form of historical Puritanism only with the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Forerunners, indeed, harbingers of the general awakening, there had been long before Luther, scattered voices as of early-wakening birds in the summer night preluding the full choir of day. The cry of all, the universal cry that rang across Europe from Wickliffe to Savonarola, from John Huss and Jerome of Prague to Zwingli and Erasmus, from the Alpine glaciers to the fiords of Norway, and which broke at last like a thunder-clap from the lips of Martin Luther, and shook the ancient ecclesiastical system to its foundations, was the demand for reform. To reform in the language of that great century meant to purify, and the Reformation in its fundamental idea was identical with Purification, with Puritanism.

But the spiritual usurpation intolerable in a pope was insufferable in a king. Henry VIII. would have made England a newer Rome; and Edmund Burke's stately phrase, studied from the aspect of a milder time, was justified in all its terrible significance in Elizabethan England. The English hierarchy raised its mitred front

in Court and Parliament, demanding unquestioning acquiescence and submission. But the conviction that had challenged Rome did not quail; and the spirit of hostility to the English as to the Roman dogma of spiritual supremacy, the spirit which asserted and defended that religious, political, and civil liberty which is the great boon of England to the world—a boon and a glory beyond that of Shakespeare, of Bacon, of Raleigh, of Gresham, of Newton, of Watts, beyond that of all her lofty literature, her endless enterprise, her inventive genius, her material prosperity, her boundless empire—was Puritanism.

If ever England had an heroic age, it was that which began by supporting the Tudor in his rupture with Rome, then asserted his own logical principle against his daughter's claim, and after a tremendous contest ended by seeing the last of the Stuart kings exiled forever, an impotent pensioner of France. This was the age of Puritan England, the England in which liberty finally organized itself in constitutional forms so flexible and enduring that for nearly two centuries the internal peace of the kingdom, however threatened and alarmed, has never been broken. The modern England that we know is the England of the Puritan enlarged, liberalized, graced, adorned — the England which, despite all estrangement and jealousy and misunderstanding, despite the alienation of the Revolution and of the second war, the buzz of cockney gnats, and official indifference in our fierce civil conflict, is still the mother-country of our distinctive America, the mother of our language and its literature, of our characteristic national

impulse and of the great muniments of our individual liberty. To what land upon the globe beyond his own shall the countryman of Washington turn with pride and enthusiasm and sympathy, if not to the land of John Selden and John Hampden and John Milton? and what realm shall touch so deeply the heart of the fellow-citizen of Abraham Lincoln as that whose soil, and long before our own, was too sacred for the footstep of a slave? She is not the mother of dead empires, but of the greatest political descendant that ever the world knew. Our own Revolution was the defence of England against herself. She has sins enough to answer for. But while Greece gave us art and Rome gave us law, in the very blood that beats in our hearts and throbs along our veins England gave us liberty.

We must not think of Puritanism as mere acrid defiance and sanctimonious sectarianism, nor of the Puritans as a band of ignorant and half-crazy zealots. Yet mainly from the vindictive caricature of his enemies is derived the popular conception of the Puritan. He was travestied by Ben Jonson's Tribulation Wholesome and Zeal-of-the-land Busy. The Puritan of whom Macaulay, following Hume, said that he hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator, was the Puritan of the plays of Charles II., when Shakespeare had been replaced by Aphra Behn, and the object of the acted drama was to stimulate a passion palled by excess and a taste brutalized by debauchery. The literature that ridiculed the Puritan sprang from the same impotent hate which scat-

tered the ashes of Wickliffe upon the Severn and disinterred the dead Cromwell and hung the body in chains at Tyburn, insulting the dust of the hero who, living, had made England great, and to whose policy, after the effeminate and treacherous Stuart reaction, England returned. The Cavaliers mocked the Puritan, as Burgoyne and the idle British officers in Boston burlesqued the Yankee patriot. They had their laugh, their jest, their gibe. But it is not to the rollicking masqueraders of the British barracks, to the scarlet soldiers of the crown, that we look to see the living picture of our Washington and Hamilton, our Jay and Adams, who plucked from the crown its brightest gem. It is not the futile ribaldry of fops and fribbles, of courtiers and courtesans, of religious slavery and political despotism, whose fatal spell over England the Puritan had broken forever, which can truly portray the Puritan.

When Elizabeth died, the country gentlemen, the great traders in the towns, the sturdy, steadfast middle class, the class from which English character and strength have sprung, were chiefly Puritans. Puritans taught in the universities and sat on the bench of bishops. They were peers in Parliament, they were ambassadors and secretaries of State. Hutchinson, graced with every accomplishment of the English gentleman, was a Puritan. Sir Henry Vane, by whose side sat justice, was a Puritan. John Hampden, purest of patriots, was a Puritan. John Pym, most strenuous of parliamentary leaders, was a Puritan. A fanatic? Yes, in the high sense of unchangeable fidelity to a sublime

idea; a fanatic like Columbus, sure of a western passage to India over a mysterious ocean which no mariner had ever sailed; a fanatic like Galileo, who marked the courses of the stars and saw, despite the jargon of authority, that still the earth moved; a fanatic like Joseph Warren, whom the glory of patriotism transfigured upon Bunker Hill. This was the fanatic who read the Bible to the English people and quickened English life with the fire of the primeval faith; who smote the Spaniard, and swept the pirates from the sea, and rode with Cromwell and his Ironsides, praising God; who to the utmost shores of the Mediterranean, and in the shuddering valleys of Piedmont, to every religious oppressor and foe of England, made the name of England terrible. This was the fanatic, soft as sunshine in the young Milton, blasting in Cromwell as the thunder-bolt, in Endicott austere as Calvin, in Roger Williams benign as Melanchthon, in John Robinson foreseeing more truth to break forth from God's word. In all history do you see a nobler figure? Forth from the morning of Greece come, Leonidas, with your bravest of the brave; in the rapt city plead, Demosthenes, your country's cause; pluck, Gracchus, from aristocratic Rome its crown; speak, Cicero, your magic word; lift, Cato, your admonishing hand; and you, patriots of modern Europe, be all gratefully remembered; but where in the earlier ages, in the later day, in lands remote or near, shall we find loftier self-sacrifice, more unstained devotion to worthier ends, issuing in happier results to the highest interests of man, than in the English Puritan?

He apprehended his own principle, indeed, often blindly, often narrowly, never in its utmost amplitude and splendor. The historic Puritan was a man of the seventeenth century, not of the nineteenth. He saw through a glass darkly, but he saw. The acorn is not yet the oak, the well-spring is not yet the river. But as the harvest is folded in the seed, so the largest freedom political and religious — liberty, not toleration, not permission, not endurance: in yonder heaven Cassiopeia does not tolerate Arcturus, nor the clustered Pleiades permit Orion to shine—the right of absolute individual liberty, subject only to the equal right of others, is the ripened fruit of the Puritan principle.

It is this fact, none the less majestic because he was unconscious of it, which invests the emigration of the Puritan to this country with a dignity and grandeur that belong to no other colonization. In unfurling his sail for that momentous voyage, he was impelled by no passion of discovery, no greed of trade, no purpose of conquest. He was the most practical, the least romantic, of men, but he was allured by no vision of worldly success. The winds that blew the *Mayflower* over the sea were not more truly airs from heaven than the moral impulse and moral heroism which inspired her voyage. Sebastian Cabot, Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Drake, Frobisher, Cortez, and Ponce de Leon, Champlain, bearing southward from the St. Lawrence the lilies of France, Henry Hudson pressing northward from Sandy Hook with the flag of Holland, sought mines of gold, a profitable trade, the fountain of youth, colonial empire, the northwest-

ern passage, a shorter channel to Cathay. But the Puritan obeyed solely the highest of all human motives. He dared all that men have ever dared, seeking only freedom to worship God. Had the story of the Puritan ended with the landing upon Plymouth Rock, had the rigors of that first winter which swept away half of the Pilgrims obliterated every trace of the settlement, had the unnoted *Mayflower* sunk at sea, still the Puritan story would have been one of the noblest in the annals of the human race. But it was happily developed into larger results, and the Puritan, changed with the changing time, adding sweetness to strength, and a broader humanity to moral conviction and religious earnestness, was reserved for a grander destiny.

The Puritan came to America seeking freedom to worship God. He meant only freedom to worship God in his own way, not in the Quaker way, not in the Baptist way, not in the Church of England way. But the seed that he brought was immortal. His purpose was to feed with it his own barn-yard fowl, but it quickened into an illimitable forest, covering a continent with grateful shade, the home of every bird that flies. Freedom to worship God is universal freedom, a free State as well as a free Church, and that was the inexorable but unconscious logic of Puritanism. Holding that the true rule of religious faith and worship was written in the Bible, and that every man must read and judge for himself, the Puritan conceived the Church as a body of independent seekers and interpreters of the truth, dispensing with priests and priestly

orders and functions; organizing itself and calling no man master. But this sense of equality before God and towards each other in the religious congregation, affecting and adjusting the highest and most enduring of all human relations, that of man to his Maker, applied itself instinctively to the relation of man to man in human society, and thus popular government flowed out of the Reformation, and the Republic became the natural political expression of Puritanism.

See, also, how the course and circumstance of the Puritan story had confirmed this tendency. The earliest English reformers, flying from the fierce reaction of Mary, sought freedom in the immemorial abode of freedom, Switzerland, whose singing waterfalls and *ranz des vaches* echoing among peaks of eternal ice and shadowy valleys of gentleness and repose, murmured ever the story of Morgarten and Sempach, the oath of the men of Rütli, the daring of William Tell, the greater revolt of Zwingli. There was Geneva, the stern republic of the Reformation, and every Alpine canton was a republican community lifted high for all men to see, a light set upon a hill. How beautiful upon the mountains were the heralds of glad tidings! This vision of the free State lingered in the Puritan mind. It passed in tradition from sire to son, and the dwellers in Amsterdam and Leyden, maintaining a republican Church, unconsciously became that republican State whose living beauty their fathers had beheld, and which they saw glorified, dimly and afar, in the old Alpine vision.

Banished, moreover, by the pitiless English persecution, the Puritans, exiles and poor in a foreign land, a

colony in Holland before they were a colony in America, were compelled to self-government, to a common sympathy and support, to bearing one another's burdens; and so, by the stern experience of actual life, they were trained in the virtues most essential for the fulfilment of their august but unimagined destiny. The patriots of the Continental Congress seemed to Lord Chatham imposing beyond the law-givers of Greece and Rome. The Constitutional Convention a hundred years ago was an assembly so wise that its accomplished work is reverently received by continuous generations, as the children of Israel received the tables of the law which Moses brought down from the Holy Mount. Happy, thrice happy the people which to such scenes in their history can add the simple grandeur of the spectacle in the cabin of the *Mayflower*, the Puritans signing the compact which was but the formal expression of the government that voluntarily they had established—the scene which makes Plymouth Rock a stepping-stone from the freedom of the solitary Alps and the disputed liberties of England to the fully developed constitutional and well-ordered republic of the United States.

The history of colonial New England and of New England in the Union is the story of the influence of the Puritan in America. It is a theme too alluring to neglect, too vast to be attempted now. But even in passing I must not urge a claim too broad. Even in the pride of this hour, and with the consent of your approving conviction and sympathy, I must not proclaim that the republic, like a conquering goddess,

sprang from the head fully armed, and that the head was New England. Yet the imperial commonwealth of which we are citizens, and every sister State, will agree that in the two great periods of our history, the colonial epoch and that of the national union, the influence of New England has not been the least of all influences in the formative and achieving processes towards the great and common result. The fondly cherished tradition of Hadley may be doubted and disproved, but like the legends of the old mythology it will live on, glowing and palpitating with essential truth. It may be that we must surrender the story of the villagers upon the Connecticut sorely beset by Indians at mid-day and about to yield; perhaps no actual venerable form appears with flowing hair—like that white plume of conquering Navarre—and with martial mien and voice of command rallies the despairing band, cheering them on to victory, then vanishing in air. The heroic legend may be a fable, but none the less it is the Puritan who marches in the van of our characteristic history, it is the subtle and penetrating influence of New England which has been felt in every part of our national life, as the cool wind blowing from her pine-clad mountains breathes a loftier inspiration, a health more vigorous, a fresher impulse, upon her own green valleys and happy fields.

See how she has diffused her population. Like the old statues of the Danube and the Nile, figures reclining upon a reedy shore and from exhaustless urns pouring water which flows abroad in a thousand streams of benediction, so has New England sent forth her chil-

dren. Following the sun westward, across the Hudson and the Mohawk and the Susquehanna, over the Alleghanies into the valley of the Mississippi, over the Sierra Nevada to the Pacific Ocean, the endless procession from New England has moved for a century, bearing everywhere Puritan principle, Puritan enterprise, and Puritan thrift. A hundred years ago New-Englanders passed beyond the calm Dutch Arcadia upon the Mohawk, and striking into the primeval forest of the ancient Iroquois domain, began the settlement of central New York. A little later, upon the Genesee, settlers from Maryland and Pennsylvania met, but the pioneers from New England took the firmest hold and left the deepest and most permanent impression. A hundred years ago there was no white settlement in Ohio. But in 1789 the seed of Ohio was carried from Massachusetts, and from the loins of the great Eastern commonwealth sprang the first great commonwealth of the West. Early in the century a score of settlements beyond the Alleghanies bore the name of Salem, the spot where first in America the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay set foot; and in the dawn of the Revolution the hunters in the remote valley of the Elkhorn, hearing the news of the 19th of April, called their camp Lexington, and thus, in the response of their heroic sympathy, the Puritan of New England named the early capital of Kentucky. But happier still, while yet the great region of the Northwest lay in primeval wilderness, awaiting the creative touch that should lift it into civilization, it was the Puritan instinct which fulfilled the aspiration of Jefferson, and by the Ordinance of

1787 consecrated the Northwest to freedom. Thus in the civilization of the country has New England been a pioneer, and so deeply upon American life and institutions has the genius of New England impressed itself that, in the great civil war, the peculiar name of the New-Englander, the Yankee, became the distinguishing title of the soldier of the Union; the national cause was the Yankee cause; and a son of the West, born in Kentucky and a citizen of Illinois, who had never seen New England twice in his life, became the chief representative Yankee, and with his hand, strong with the will of the people, the Puritan principle of liberty and equal rights broke the chains of a race. New England characteristics have become national qualities. The blood of New England flows with energizing, modifying, progressive power in the veins of every State; and the undaunted spirit of the Puritan, *sic semper tyrannis*, animates the continent from sea to sea.

I have mentioned the two cardinal periods of our history, the colonial epoch and the epoch of the Union. In all exclusively material aspects our colonial annals are perhaps singularly barren of the interest which makes history attractive. Straggling and desultory Indian warfare, the transformation of wild forest-land to fertile fields, marches to the frontier to repel the French, the establishment of peaceful industries, the opening of prosperous trade, a vast contest with nature, and incessant devotion to material circumstance and condition; but with no soft and humanizing light of native literature shining upon the hard life, no refining art, no great controversies of statesmanship in

which the genius of the English-speaking race delights—these, with a rigid and sombre theology overshadowing all, compose the colonial story. Yet the colonial epoch was the heroic period of our annals. For, beneath all these earnest and engrossing activities of colonial life, its unwasting central fire was the sensitive jealousy of the constant encroachment of the home government, against which the Puritan instinct and the Puritan practice furnished the impregnable defence. The free church, the free school, the town-meeting, institutions of a community which not only loves liberty, but comprehends the conditions under which liberty ceases to be merely the aspiration of hope, and becomes an actual possession and an organized power — these were the practical schools of American independence, and these were the distinctive institutions of New England. Without the training of such institutions successful colonial resistance would have been impossible, but without New England this training would not have been.

Nay, more: I can conceive that New England, planted by a hundred men who were selected by the struggle for freedom of two hundred years—New England, of a homogeneous population and common religious faith, cherishing the proud tradition of her origin, and during the long virtual isolation from Europe of a hundred and forty years successfully governing herself, might, even alone, with sublime temerity and without the co-operation of other colonies, have defied the unjust mother-country, and with the unappalled devotion of the Swiss cantons which the early Puritans knew, and with all the instinct of a true national life, have

sought national independence. This I can conceive. But the preliminary movement, the nascent sentiment of independence deepening into conviction and ripening into revolution, the assured consciousness of ability to cope with every circumstance and to command every event, that supreme, sovereign, absolute absorption and purpose which interpret the truth that "one with God is a majority" — all this in colonial America without New England I cannot, at that time, conceive. I do not say, of course, that except for New England America would have remained always colonial and subject to Great Britain. Not that at all; but only this, that for every great movement of change and progress, of research and discovery, of protest and revolution, there must be a pioneer. Who supposes that except for Columbus the western continent would have remained hidden always and unknown to the eastern world? But who can doubt that, except for the perpetual brooding vision which filled the soul of the Genoese and bound him fast to the mysterious quest, the awed Indians of San Salvador would not have seen the forerunner of civilization on that October morning four centuries ago, and that except for Columbus America would not then have been discovered? So, in the colonial epoch, doubtless the same general feeling prevailed through all the colonies, the same great principles were cherished, the same motives stirred the united colonial heart. The cry was not Virginia nor Massachusetts, it was continental America. But, none the less, on the transplanted sapling of the English oak that drew its sustenance from the common American soil, the one bud most

sensitive, most swelling, from which the vigorous new growth was sure to spring, was Puritan New England.

In our second historical epoch, that of the Union, the essential controversy, under whatever plea and disguise, was that of the fundamental principle of free government with a social, political, and industrial system to which that principle was absolutely hostile. Tariffs, banks, fiscal schemes, internal policy, foreign policy, State sovereignty, the limitations of national authority —these were the counters with which the momentous game was played. I speak to those in whose memories still echo the thunders and flash the lightnings of that awful tempest in the forum and the field. I accuse no section of the country. I arraign no party. I denounce no man. I speak of forces greater than men, forces deep as human nature, forces that make and unmake nations, that threw Hampden with the Parliament and Falkland with the king. It was a controversy whose first menace was heard in the first Congress, and which swelled constantly louder and more threatening to the end. A house divided against itself cannot stand, said the beloved patriot who was to be the national martyr of the strife. The conflict is irrepressible, answered the statesman who was to share with him the conduct of the country through the storm. Who could doubt that it was irrepressible who knew the American heart; but who could doubt also that it would be tremendous, appalling, who knew the resources of the foe? American slavery was so strong in tradition, in sentiment, in commercial interest, in political power, in constitutional theory, in the timidity of trade, in the pas-

sion for union, in dogged and unreasoning sectional hatred; it so pleaded a religious sanction, the patriarchal relation, even a certain romance of childlike dependence and the extension of Christian grace to the heathen, that, like an unassailable fortress upon heights inaccessible, it frowned in gloomy sovereignty over a subject land.

There was but one force which could oppose the vast and accumulated power of slavery in this country, and that was the force which, in other years and lands, had withstood the consuming terrors of the hierarchy and the crushing despotism of the crown — the conscience of the people; a moral conviction so undaunted and uncompromising that resistance could not exhaust it, nor suffering nor wounds nor death appall. The great service of the Puritan in the second epoch was the appeal to this conscience which prepared it for the conflict. Its key-note was the immortal declaration of Garrison, in which the trumpet-voice of the spirit that has made New England rang out once more, clear and unmistakable, awaking at last the reluctant echoes of the continent, "I am in earnest; I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." There were other voices, indeed, voices everywhere, harmonious and historic voices, swelling the chorus; but chiefly from New England came the moral appeal, penetrating and persistent, disdaining political argument and party alliance—an appeal which, with all the ancient fervor of the Puritan faith, spurning every friendly remonstrance, every plea of prudence, every prophecy of disaster, and every form

of obloquy and malignant enmity, urged upon every citizen the personal guilt of complicity with national wrong, and by its divine logic inexorably forced parties to the true issue, moulding our politics anew; and when debate ended, the same spirit, irradiating the embattled cause of the Union, of the national pride, of the honor of the flag, with the glory of the old and eternal Puritan principle of human liberty and equal rights, threw its veil of light over our shame and our sorrow and our long sectional alienation.

In the great drama of our history this was the distinctive part of New England in the separate colonies and in the later Union. Under another sky, in a different time, and amid changed conditions, it was the service of the same spirit that challenged the Vatican, shook the crowned majesty of the Tudor and the Stuart, and made straight in the desert a highway for republican liberty—the spirit of the Lincolnshire fugitive, of the exile in Holland, of the pilgrim of the *Mayflower* and his brethren of the *Arbella;* of the English Puritan, expanded, developed, matured into the American patriot. It is a spirit to be reverenced and cherished, and perpetuated, if it may be, in adequate and noble human form and so made permanently visible to men. We know, indeed, that the builders of memorial statues measure themselves; that they raise in enduring marble and in bronze imperishable and relentless censors of the lives of those who build them, and that no man shall stand unrebuked in the sculptured presence of departed greatness. But the power that rebukes inspires; and this statue shall stand not only as the memorial of our

reverence for the Fathers, but as the pledge of the children's fidelity to their fathers' principle and their fathers' aim.

Here in this sylvan seclusion, amid the sunshine and the singing of birds, we raise the statue of the Puritan Pilgrim, that in this changeless form the long procession of the generations which shall follow us may see what manner of man he was to the outward eye whom history and tradition have so often flouted and traduced, but who walked undismayed the solitary heights of duty and of service to mankind. Here let him stand, the soldier of a free Church calmly defying the hierarchy, the builder of a free State serenely confronting the continent which he shall settle and subdue. The unspeaking lips shall chide our unworthiness, the lofty mien exalt our littleness, the unblenching eye invigorate our weakness; and the whole poised and firmly planted form reveal the unconquerable moral energy—the master-force of American civilization. So stood the sentinel on Sabbath morning, guarding the plain house of prayer while wife and child and neighbor worshipped within. So mused the Pilgrim in the rapt sunset hour on the New England shore, his soul caught up into the dazzling vision of the future, beholding the glory of the nation that should be. And so may that nation stand forever and forever, the mighty guardian of human liberty, of God-like justice, of Christ-like brotherhood.

XVI

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACE

A SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL DINNER OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 15, 1887

The so-called annual "banquet" of the New York Chamber of Commerce on November 15, 1887, was distinguished by the presence of the Rt. Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., Special Commissioner of the British Government on the Joint Commission for the Settlement of the Fisheries Difficulties.

After Mr. Chamberlain and others had spoken, Mr. Curtis was called on to speak in response to the toast, "The English-speaking race: The founders of commonwealths, pioneers of progress; stubborn defenders of liberty; may they ever work together for the world's welfare."

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACE

AFTER a few introductory words Mr. Curtis said:— The sentiment which you have read, Mr. Chairman, describes in a few comprehensive words the historic characteristics of the English-speaking race. That it is the founder of commonwealths let the miracle of empire which it has wrought upon the Western Continent attest. It has advanced from the seaboard with the rifle and the axe, the plough and the shuttle, the teapot and the Bible, a rocking-chair and a spelling-book, a bath-tub and a free constitution, sweeping across the Alleghanies, overspreading the prairies, and pushing on until the dash of the Atlantic in its ears dies in the murmur of the Pacific; and as, whenever the goddess of the old mythology touched the earth, flowers and fruits answered her footfall, so in the long trail of this advancing race it has left clusters of happy States, teeming with a population, man by man, more intelligent and prosperous than ever before the sun shone upon, and each remoter camp of that triumphal march is but a further outpost of English-speaking civilization. [*Applause.*] That it is the pioneer of progress is written all over the globe to the utmost

isles of the sea, and upon every page of the history of civil and religious and commercial freedom. [*Cheers.*] Every factory that hums with marvellous machinery, every railway and steamer, every telegraph and telephone, the changed systems of agriculture, the endless and universal throb and heat of magical invention, are, in their larger part, but the expression of the genius of the race that with Watts drew from the airiest vapor the mightiest of motive powers; with Franklin leashed the lightning, and with Morse outfabled fairy lore. The race that extorted from kings the charter of its political rights has won from the princes and powers of the air, the earth, and the water, the secret of supreme dominion, the illimitable franchise of beneficent material progress. [*Applause.*] That it is the stubborn defender of liberty, let our own annals answer, for America sprang from the defence of English liberty in English colonies, by men of English blood, who still proudly speak the English language, cherish English traditions, and share of right, and as their own, the ancient glory of England. [*Applause.*]

No English-speaking people could, if it would, escape its distinctive name, and since Greece and Judea no name is more worthy of honor among men. We Americans may flout England a hundred times. We may oppose her opinions with reason, we may think her views unsound, her policy unwise. But from what country would the most American of Americans prefer to have derived the characteristic impulse of American development and civilization rather than England?

What language would we rather speak than the tongue of Shakespeare and Hampden, of the Pilgrims and King James's version? What yachts, as a tribute to ourselves upon their own element, would we rather outsail than English yachts? [*Laughter.*] In what national life, modes of thought, standards and estimates of character and achievement do we find our own so perfectly reflected as in the English House of Commons, in English counting-rooms and workshops, and in English homes? [*Applause.*]

No doubt the original stock has been essentially modified in the younger branch. The American, as he looks across the sea to what Hawthorne happily called "Our Old Home," and contemplates himself, is disposed to murmur, "Out of the eater shall come forth meat, and out of strength shall come forth sweetness." He left England a Puritan iconoclast; he has developed, in Church and State, into a constitutional reformer. He came hither a knotted club; he has been transformed into a Damascus blade. He seized and tamed the continent with a hand of iron; he civilizes and controls it with a touch of velvet. No music so sweet to his ear as the sound of the common-school bell; no principle so dear to his heart as the equal rights of all men; no vision so entrancing to his hope as those rights universally secured. [*Applause.*] This is the Yankee, this is the younger branch; but a branch of no base or brittle fibre, but of the tough old English oak, which has weathered triumphantly the tempests of a thousand years. It is a noble contention whether the younger or the elder branch has further

advanced the frontiers of liberty. But it is unquestionable that liberty, as we understand it on both sides of the sea, is an English tradition. We inherit it, we possess it, we transmit it, under forms peculiar to the English race. It is, as Mr. Chamberlain has said, liberty under law. It is liberty, not license; civilization, not barbarism; it is liberty clad in the celestial robe of law, because law is the only authoritative expression of the will of the people. Representative government, trial by jury, the *habeas corpus*, freedom of speech and of the press—why, Mr. Chairman, they are the family heirlooms, the family diamonds, and they go wherever in the wide world go the family name and language and tradition. [*Applause.*]

Sir, with all my heart, and, I am sure, with the hearty assent of this great and representative company, I respond to the final aspiration of your toast: "May this great family, in all its branches, ever work together for the world's welfare." Certainly its division and alienation would be the world's misfortune. That England and America have had sharp and angry quarrels is undeniable. Party spirit in this country, recalling an old animosity, has always stigmatized with an English name whatever it opposed. Every difference, every misunderstanding with England has been ignobly turned to party account. But the two great branches of this common race have come of age, and wherever they may encounter a serious difficulty which must be accommodated, they have but to thrust demagogues aside, to recall the sublime words of Abraham Lincoln, "With malice towards none, with charity for

all"; and in that spirit, and in the spirit of the mission represented in this country by the gentlemen upon my right and my left, I make bold to say to Mr. Chamberlain, in your name, there can be no misunderstanding which may not be honorably and happily adjusted. [*Cheers.*] For to our race, gentlemen of both countries, is committed not only the defence, but the illustration, of constitutional liberty. The question is, not what we did a century ago or in the beginning of this century, with the lights that shone around us; but what is our duty to-day, in the light which is given to us of popular government under the republican form in this country and the parliamentary form in England. If a sensitive public conscience, if general intelligence, should not avail to secure us from unnatural conflict, then Liberty will not be justified of her children, and the glory of the English-speaking race will decline. I do not believe it. I believe that it is constantly increasing, and that the colossal power which slumbers in the arms of a kindred people will henceforth be invoked, not to drive them further asunder, but to weld them more indissolubly together in the defence of liberty under law. [*Prolonged cheers.*]

XVII

THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE COMPLETION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ACADEMIC YEAR OF VASSAR COLLEGE, POUGHKEEPSIE, N. Y., JUNE 12, 1890

THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN

On a summer day like this, nearly fifty years ago, the anniversary of West Indian emancipation, Mr. Emerson described that event as "a day of reason, of the clear light, of that which makes us better than a flock of birds or beasts." It is another day like that, a day of another emancipation, of a distinct step of higher civilization, that we are assembled to commemorate. For events of historical importance the imagination craves a fitting scene, and here the imagination is satisfied. We stand upon the banks of the Hudson, and the Hudson is our most historic river. Its charm is blended of natural beauty, of patriotic story, of literature and legend. It was the channel by which Hendrick Hudson sought a shorter route to Cathay. It was the war-path of France and Great Britain contending for continental dominion. Its possession was the tactical object of the war of our independence. Upon its shores the controversy culminated in the decisive surrender of British arms and the open French alliance. Upon these shores, also, Washington put aside the crown, and at the mouth of the Hudson he saw retiring England furl her flag and sail away. At King-

ston on the Hudson sat the convention that adopted the State Constitution. At Fishkill the commemorative Cincinnati was organized. Here in Poughkeepsie, beneath the watchful eyes of George Clinton, like the contending gods in the Homeric legend, Alexander Hamilton and Melanchthon Smith strove in the great debate upon the Constitution of the United States, and here New York consented to the Constitution, and once more, upon the Hudson, the career of Washington reached its crowning glory as he entered upon the Presidency of the United States.

What memorable events have consecrated this river and these shores! What voices have thrilled the air of this prolific and prosperous valley! What noble figures have peopled this majestic scene! But its story does not end with the Revolution. With the golden age of peace the vast manorial estates of the Hudson gave to the river a singular social distinction, and its shores were the renowned seat of magnificent hospitality. Towns and cities clustering beside it marked the advance of American prosperity. Following the *Half-Moon* of Hendrick Hudson, after just two hundred years, the *Clermont* of Robert Fulton moved sailless against the stream, and commerce and human intercourse were emancipated from dependence upon the coy and fitful wind. A little later, with simple republican pomp and amid the happy truce of parties, the water of Lake Erie was borne down the Hudson to the sea, and a smooth and unobstructed way to the markets of the world was opened to the mighty Northwest. But still the beneficent river lacked one leaf in its chap-

let. Its stately course through storied scenes, its shores teeming with prosperous content, its landscape of undulating and endless beauty from the Palisades to the Catskill and the softer rural reaches beyond, yet wanted the spell which holds the traveller's foot at every step in the lesser landscape of other lands, the spell of the genius which lifts them into literature, and so gives to every cultivated mind in the world an indefeasible estate in the local landscape.

In a large sense the experiment of American independence was associated with this river. British dominion fell and the republic was formally inaugurated upon its banks. Upon the Hudson, Fulton's genius and Clinton's enterprise had given the quickening impulse to American invention and industry, and, at last, American creative literature was born under its spell. The shore at Tarrytown, stretching backward to Sleepy Hollow, the broad water of the Tappan Zee, the airy heights of the summer Catskill, were at last suffused with the rosy light of literature by the kindly genius of Washington Irving. Burns and Scott have made their Scotland the Scotland of all the world. Every hill and stream and bird and flower of the beloved land is reflected individually and fondly in Scottish tale and song. The Scotchman with his deep and strong national sentiment, a feeling which survives untouched by all acts of political union with the British empire, murmurs wherever he goes the legendary music of the Ayr and the Doon, of the laverock and the mavis, the Scottish landscape and the Scottish legend.

It is curious that our literature should have been

born of a reaction of sentiment. It was all sermon until Bryant's "Thanatopsis," and Bryant's muse was essentially Puritanic. But as the boy Irving used to escape from the severity of religious discipline by dropping out of the window and stealing to the play, so in his gentle genius our nascent literature at last escaped the sermon and came laughing into life. Not less striking is the fact that the first distinct creation of that literature should have been a characteristically un-American figure. Irving's genius was what in the old English phrase would have been called sauntering. It cast the glamour of idlesse over our sharp, positive, and busy American life. Rip Van Winkle, the indolent and kindly vagabond, asserts the charm of day-dream and loitering against all the engrossing hurry of lucrative activity. At first he and the grotesque Knickerbocker heroes were solitary figures in our letters. But so strong is the magic of the Hudson that Rip Van Winkle, on the western shore, was soon joined by Cooper's Spy upon the eastern, and presently by Leatherstocking, until long since Rip is but one of a goodly company. Yet still he holds his place. Another literary spirit, a freer impulse, greater genius, and figures more commanding and elaborate, appear. But while one lurid Scarlet Letter spells Puritan, and the keen laughter of Hosea Biglow nails fast the counterfeit American, still Rip Van Winkle lounges idly by, and the vagabond of the Hudson is an unwasting figure of the imagination, the earliest, most constant, gentlest satirist of American life.

These are but glimpses of the associations of the Hudson River. But they show how peculiarly identi-

fied it is with our history and literature, with our patriotism and national life. It is surely a singular felicity of fortune that it should be also as intimately associated with the great step of advancing civilization which we celebrate to-day, and that upon the shores of the Hudson should be founded the first amply endowed and adequately organized college for women. Like all important steps of social progress, the rise of such an institution is a development, not a sudden creation. Growth, not miracle, is the law of life. Even St. John's day, the longest day of the year, is not a sudden burst of splendor; it brightens gradually from the faintest flush of dawn. The rose-bush does not break into fulness of bloom on some happy morning in June, but with the warmth of early April the buds begin to swell and the green begins to deepen, and gradually, like a queen leisurely robing for her coronation, tint is added to tint, beauty to beauty, until it stands in the sovereign glory of perfect blossom. So our political Constitution was not, as is sometimes said, an inspiration; it was an application. From the ancient customs of Swiss cantons, from the meadow of Runnymede, from the Grand Remonstrance and the Petition of Right, in steady Anglo-Saxon succession and with accumulating force, the principles of our Constitution were derived. No one of them was new in our system, but the application of them at once to the States and to the Union of the States, this was unprecedented, this was the sunrise in which all the earlier brightening rays of light culminated in day.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that we are

celebrating an event which was unheralded and had been neither attempted nor foreseen. The greatness of the occasion and the fame of Mr. Vassar ask no such impossible tribute. Every important movement, we are apt to say, is at last one man. It is true that great events in history are symbolized by certain names, as Columbus and the discovery of America, Sam Adams and American Independence, Samuel Romilly and the reform of the penal laws, Dr. Franklin and the lightning-conductor, Garrison and the abolition of slavery, Henry Bergh and the compassionate care of domestic animals. But a leader is strong by the strength of others. He is sustained by what is called the spirit of the age, and he follows, like a keen Indian guide in a company of white men, the trail which forerunners have made. Columbus lived in an age of discovery. He heard more wisely than other men the voices which Charles Sumner called "prophetic voices" concerning America, and he knew the reason why sailing west would bring him to the East that he sought. Leaders merely lead. They are only a little in advance. They mark the irritation of the stem at the point where the bud will appear. Men like John Howard and Pinel are signs of a quickening public sense of wrong in penal and curative systems, which responds effectively to their appeal. In Matthew Vassar matured the vague desire and tentative groping towards a complete opportunity for the equal higher education of women; but partial efforts, tentative experiments, intelligent schemes, for the same subject there had already been, and already signal progress had been achieved.

It is about a century since an active and constantly progressive interest in the higher, or more truly the better, education of women began. During the eighteenth century the schools of Prussia, the country in Europe which has most fostered the interests of education, had steadily declined, and the schools for girls were much less efficient than those for boys. The great impulse of the modern Prussian school system was given by the most famous of Homeric scholars, Frederick Augustus Wolf, who was invited to Halle in 1783 by Frederick the Great. Even the Prussian catastrophe at Jena in 1806 was not strong enough permanently to disturb that impulse, which, only two years after the battle, created a department of schools and placed William von Humboldt at its head. It was under the influence of the same impulse which produced the modern Prussian school system that in 1804 what is supposed to be the first seminary for women teachers was founded in Prussia.

But still the general European feeling regarding the education of women was expressed by Mrs. Barbauld's exhortation to her sex. Remember, she says to what Thackeray would have called the young British female of a century ago, "your best, your sweetest empire is to please." Mrs. Barbauld was one of the most estimable of women and altogether superior to her own exhortation, which was simply that of every Circassian slave-dealer hurrying his lovely captive to the seraglio. Meanwhile in this country much of the freedom and equality which were vehemently declared to be the rights of human nature was yet waiting for recogni-

tion, and continued, and with all that has been achieved still continues, to wait.

If a woman suggested that possibly her part of human nature had rights also as well as powers, she was told with a forgiving smile that nature had endowed her with exquisite emotions and remarkable instincts and intuitions, and that Heaven designed her to be a lovely vine hanging by delicate tendrils to the sturdy oak of man. This waiting was especially true of the education of women. Towards the close of the century Mrs. John Adams, one of the most highly cultivated women of her time, said that "female education in the best families went no further than writing and arithmetic, and in some few and rare instances music and dancing." But the general standard even of the best education in this country at the beginning of the century was very low. In the year 1800, although there were perhaps twenty-five institutions in the Union called colleges, most of them were little more than high-schools, and all together they did not graduate, probably, five hundred students annually. Noah Webster said, "We may be said to have no learning at all, or a mere smattering; . . . as to libraries, we have no such things"; and George Ticknor, writing of the early part of the century, said that good school-books were rare in Boston—which seems to us to-day much like saying that good diamonds are rare in Golconda — while a copy of Euripides, he said, could not be bought at any bookseller's, nor a German book found in the College at Cambridge—a situation to be paralleled in the imagination only by Paris without the opera or Epsom

without the races. If the scholastic diet of men at that day was so meagre, we can imagine what that of women must have been.

But the protest of feeling had already begun. Eighty years ago, reviewing, in the *Edinburgh*, Mr. Thomas Broadhurst's "Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind," a title which might have described the books that were read by the good young ladies in Miss Austen's novels, Sydney Smith said that the immense disparity which existed between the knowledge of men and of women admitted of no rational defence; because, said the sensible canon, "nature has been as bountiful of understanding to one sex as the other." While he was writing, Mrs. Emma Willard — whose name should be always held in honor at Vassar and at every similar institution in the world—was improving the minds of young ladies at a school in Vermont, and a few years afterwards founded, also upon the banks of the Hudson, the Troy Female Seminary.* This was a conspicuous advance in the scope and conception of such academies at that day. But the time was ripe for Mrs. Willard, as it was for Columbus and for every leader of civilization. In the year after the opening of the Troy Academy, Miss Catherine Beecher, at Hartford, began her higher school for young women, and at the same time Mary Lyon was already teaching in New Hampshire. These schools showered the seed of the higher education of women all over the country, and Mary Lyon cherished the hope of a school "which should be to young women what a college is to young

* In 1821.

men," and by patient devotion and persistence she modestly founded at last the Mount Holyoke Seminary.

Simultaneously with the opening of the schools of Mrs. Willard and Miss Beecher began the agitation for a girls' high-school in Boston, as a part of the public-school system of that city. With careful economy of the city resources, girls had been permitted to attend the public schools in summer, when there were not boys enough to fill them. But a pressure for a more generous education had arisen, and such was the persistent and unwomanly zeal for knowledge, that after a prolonged debate of three years a high-school was established. The onset of girls bent upon higher education was overwhelming. Like the astounded Mr. Barnacle in "Little Dorrit," the city fathers were confronted by a persistent crowd of scholars that "wanted to know, you know."

The mayor in dismay announced that "two hundred and eighty-six candidates had presented themselves for admission, while the applications for the boys' high-school had never exceeded ninety, and the greatest number of boys ever admitted in one year was eighty-four." But such immoderate zeal for knowledge was never known, not only of geography and history, of the multiplication-table and vulgar fractions, but even of chemistry and natural philosophy. What was to be done? What if these daring girls should demand to study Latin and Greek? What if they should insist upon Euclid and Laplace? Zoölogy and moral philosophy and even astronomy itself might follow. The prospect was appalling. The awful question probably

presented itself to the city fathers, What if Boston women should come to know more than Boston men? Suppose there should arise a board of alderwomen, what would become of Boston? As the good old deacon used to say, "Suppose, fellow-sinners, you should wake up to-morrow morning and find yourselves dead, what would you say then?" The situation became intolerable, and in eighteen months the Boston High-School for Girls was closed because there was so great a multitude of eager scholars. The mayor attested the general awakening of public sentiment, reversing Mrs. Barbauld's gentle gospel, "Your best, your sweetest empire is to please," by saying, "It is just as impracticable to give a classical education to all the girls of the city whose parents would wish them to be thus educated at the expense of the city, as to give such a one to all the boys at the city's expense. No funds of any city could endure the expense of it."

About sixty years ago, then, public opinion had so far advanced that Oberlin College, in Ohio, was chartered in 1834, and apparently the first collegiate diploma granted to a woman in this country was at Oberlin in 1838. In this college young men and young women were associated in study. Oberlin was the first institution to try the experiment of co-education. Horace Mann, the American apostle of common-school education, became President of Antioch College, also in Ohio, in 1853, and spoke of co-education there as his great experiment. In the previous year Lombard University, in Illinois, was chartered with absolute equality of its privileges between the sexes.

These were undoubtedly frontier outposts of changing public sentiment regarding the education of women. But meanwhile, in 1836, the Legislature of Georgia chartered a college for women at Macon, which for some mysterious reason was called the Georgia Female College. Women are undoubtedly females, but no more so than men are males. The word college does not admit the distinction of sex, and there is no more propriety in calling Vassar a female college than Yale or Columbia a male college. Upon a most valuable and excellent institution in the city of New York there is a sign which announces that a reading-room for males and females is to be found within. But whether designed for equine males or bovine females is not stated. Besides the Georgia college for women there was a Wesleyan College, in Ohio, incorporated in 1846, and in 1848 the Mary Sharp College at Winchester, in Tennessee, while the Elmira College, in New York, graduated its first class in 1859.

These facts and dates are interesting not as incident to any controversy of priority, but as illustrations of a changing public sentiment. The test of civilization is the estimate of woman. The measure of that estimate is the degree of practical acknowledgment of her equal liberty of choice and action with men, and nothing is historically plainer than that the progress of moral and political liberty since the Reformation has included a consequent and constant movement for the abolition of every arbitrary restraint upon the freedom of women. It has been, indeed, very gradual. Compliment and incredulity have persistently bowed out justice and rea-

son. But as usual the exiles have steadily returned stronger and more resolute. Their first definite demand was that of education. For this they have pleaded against tradition, prejudice, scepticism, ridicule, and superstition. There has been bitter contention not only over the end, but the means. Profuse eloquence and wit and learning have been expended in the discussion of the comparative excellence of co-education or separate education, of the limitations and conditions which Nature herself has prescribed to the range and degree of education for women, of the divine intentions, and of the natural sphere of the sexes.

In this ardent but ludicrous debate there have been as many theorizers as theories. The gentlemen of Charles II.'s court thought that women were educated enough if they could spell out the recipes of pies and puddings, the manufacture of which nature had intrusted to their tender mercies. Lord Byron did not like to see women eat, because he thought angels should be superior to beef and beer, and it is still a very popular current belief that it is the sphere of lovely woman

> "To eat strawberries, sugar, and cream,
> Sit on a cushion, and sew up a seam."

This debate of the sphere of the sexes as determining the character and limits of education is very amusing. For if the sexes have spheres, there really seems to be no more reason to apprehend that women will desert their sphere than men. I have not observed any general anxiety lest men should steal away from their workshops and offices that they may darn the family stock-

ings or cook the dinner, and I see no reason to suppose that it will be necessary to chain women to the cradle to prevent their insisting upon running locomotives or shipping before the mast. We may be very sure that we shall never know the sphere of any responsible human being until he has perfect freedom of choice and liberty of growth. All we can clearly see is that the intellectual capacity of women is an inexplicable waste of reserved power, if its utmost education is justly to be deprecated as useless or undesirable.

Our dogmatism in sheer speculation is constantly satirized by history. Education was not more vehemently alleged to be absurd for women than political equality to be dangerous for men. Happily our own century has played havoc with both beliefs, however sincerely supposed to be ordinances of nature. The century began with saying contemptuously that women do not need to be educated to be dutiful wives and good mothers. A woman, it said, can dress prettily and dance gracefully even if she cannot conjugate the Greek verbs in *mi;* and the ability to calculate an eclipse would not help her to keep cream from feathering in hot weather. But grown older and wiser the century asks, as it ends, "Is it then true that ignorant women are the best wives and mothers? Does good wifehood consist exclusively in skilful baking and boiling and neat darning and patching? No," says the enlightened century; "if the more languages a man hath the more man is he, the more knowledge a woman hath the better wife and mother is she." And if any sceptic should ask, "But can delicate woman endure the hardship of a college

course of study?" it is a woman who ingeniously turns the flank of the questioner with a covert sarcasm at her own sex—"I would like you to take thirteen hundred young men, and lace them up, and hang ten to twenty pounds of clothes upon their waists, perch them on three-inch heels, cover their heads with ripples, chignons, rats, and mice, and stick ten thousand hairpins into their scalps. If they can stand all this they will stand a little Latin and Greek."

"While I was musing," says the Psalmist, "the fire burned." While the controversy about woman blew high and low, common-sense steadily prevailed and public opinion ripened. There are always watchmen on high towers of observation who foretell the approach of change. Like the muezzin on the minaret of the mosque, they wake while others sleep. But the spirit of an age is shown, not in the foresight of its wiser men and the dreams and hopes of the few, but in its general disposition and thought. It is not the arbutus and the early violet of doubtful April which assure us that summer has come, but the whole blossoming landscape and the halcyon air of June. So it seems to me the maturity of public sentiment in this country in regard to the education of women is admirably illustrated in the foundation of this institution. Matthew Vassar was not a student nor a scholar, nor were his familiar associations those of the university and intellectual life. From his childhood he was immersed in business and trade. Sturdy, upright, faithful, sagacious, he was an admirable representative of what Lincoln happily called "the plain people," who have given to this country its

distinctive character. His life and thought undoubtedly reflected the general tendency of the time and the community in which he lived. The public sentiment of an old American community like this is usually intelligent and progressive in a degree which is often unknown until it is demonstrated either by some emergency like that of the civil war or by some individual act.

There are great names in the history of New York, names illustrious from the character and service of those who bore them, names fondly familiar as those of fathers and leaders of the State. But among the most eminent of such citizens whom the old English phrase described as worthies, eminent for the significance and value of their services in a sphere which has none of the exciting glamour of military achievement or political renown, are Ezra Cornell and Matthew Vassar. One day during the debate in the last Constitutional Convention of this State* upon the proposed clause in regard to Cornell University, I was sitting by Mr. Cornell, and when one of the speakers quoted a Latin phrase Mr. Cornell turned to me and said, "What does that mean?" Fortunately for me the answer was not difficult, and when I explained, he said quietly, "If I can have my way, nobody in this State hereafter need be obliged to ask that question."

"I challenge any lover of Massachusetts," said a great patriot and scholar† at the centenary of the battle of Concord and Lexington, "to read the fifty-ninth chap-

* In 1867. † Mr. Emerson.

ter of 'Bancroft's History' without tears of joy." It is the chapter which describes the beginning of the Revolution. With something of the same feeling I may say that I challenge any lover of New York or of the American character to read the first communication of Matthew Vassar to the trustees of this college without profound gratitude and admiration. In his simple words, unconsciously to himself, speaks the truest spirit of his time and country. "It occurred to me that woman, having received from her Creator the same intellectual constitution as man, has the same right as man to intellectual culture and development." These words might well be carved in gold over the entrance of Vassar College. The fundamental truth which settles the controversy about the education of women was never more completely and exclusively expressed, and, like all fundamental truths when once adequately stated, it is simple and indisputable. Yet in that controversy, if he heeded it at all, Mr. Vassar had taken no part. The conflict with tradition and the logical consequences which his views involved, if they occurred to him, did not trouble him. "I consider," he said, "that the mothers of a country mould the character of its citizens, determine its institutions, and shape its destiny." The duty and the necessity of the thorough training of all their faculties were therefore to his mind unquestionable. If anybody was anxious about the sphere of woman, Mr. Vassar was not. Reason and observation had revealed it. As there was no doubt that it was for the interest of society that men should be thoroughly trained morally, intellectually, and industrially, there

could be no doubt that such training was equally desirable for women, except upon the theory which advancing civilization had steadily abjured.

Mr. Vassar's declaration twenty-five years ago is the satisfactory evidence that public sentiment had reached the conviction which his few and unqualified words announce. Those words quietly set aside forever the practice of the Boston High-School admitting girls when boys did not want the places. They signalized the end of the tradition which had produced the immense disparity, that Sydney Smith declared admitted of no defence, between the knowledge of men and women. "For the last thirty years," said Mr. Vassar, "the standard of education for the sex has been constantly rising in the United States." The chief obstruction was want of ample endowment. "It is my hope," said he, "to be the instrument in the hand of Providence of founding an institution which shall accomplish for young women what our colleges are accomplishing for young men."

The movement of opinion which lifted Mr. Vassar to his happy design had already produced, as we have seen, seminaries and even colleges for women. But, admirable as schools, and significant as they were of the tendencies of thought, the adequate resource and comprehensive scheme which surround the teacher with all the appliances of teaching were here first fully and properly supplied. And if now, at the end of a quarter of a century from the opening of its doors, the founder, as he naturally liked to be called, should visibly return, and sitting here should contemplate his work and

closely survey the record of this college, would he regret his high resolve and wish that he had given it another form? His deliberate decision founded this institution, which was at once the test of the accuracy with which he apprehended the drift of the sentiment of his time and one of its strongest confirmations. Was he wrong in believing that the time had come for opening to women the opportunity of the highest education? Vassar asks. Smith and Wellesley and Bryn Mawr, Holyoke and Barnard colleges, and all the opening college doors and opening minds of trustees and faculties, the professional schools for women, and fellowships and endowments, and vanishing sophistries and prejudices, and the extending empire of common-sense, all answer. Even the good old conservative stock of our Columbia College, the scholastic home of Hamilton and Jay, of Gouverneur Morris and De Witt Clinton, brilliantly blossoms into degrees for women, and, as the other older collegiate nurseries of our education feel the gentle feminine pressure which holds their hesitating gates ajar, the chorus of manly voices within begins to murmur, "If women are not afraid of us, why should we be afraid of women?"

Elsewhere in the world the spectacle is the same. In England, in the shadow of venerable Oxford and Cambridge, Girton and Newnham Colleges share the equal facilities of the universities, and both the great universities have extended themselves by establishing throughout the kingdom examinations to which multitudes of studious girls resort. In Germany, as Miss Emma Atkinson Almy tells us in a recent paper, women ask en-

trance for scientific study into the universities of Prussia, Würtemberg, and Bavaria. The government hesitates, but sends an envoy to inquire into the methods and workings of the English colleges for women, while the Victoria Lyceum at Berlin has established a course and methods of study which would naturally develop into a university ending in a State examination and diploma. In France the higher schools for women are constantly higher still, and at the Educational Congress in Paris, during the Exposition of last year,* women were as valued counsellors as in our late National Conference of Charities at Baltimore, or upon State boards and school committees. The University of Paris opens its doors to women in certain studies, and the London University does not hesitate. The universities of Australia are open to women upon equal terms with men. To Switzerland the aspiring young women of Germany resort to secure the education which as yet their fatherland denies, while the Spanish and Italian universities do not disdain to train women in special studies, and northern Europe provides schools for women of constantly higher grades, and obeys the wise and kindly spirit of the age.

But there is yet a final question. Conceding that Mr. Vassar's act was justified by the conviction and the desire of his time—still, were they not mistaken; was not the foreboding of doubt a forecast of truth, and the warning of ancient tradition a voice which should have been heeded? Matthew Vassar was an emancipator.

* In 1889.

To those who, comparatively speaking, had sat in darkness he gave light. But are not those now justified who winced at the shining of the light? That is the question. Have this larger liberty of education, this freedom of choice, this devoted and successful study, this winning of the scholastic palm and proud decoration of the degree—have all these, either in the persons of the students themselves or in the general effect upon their sex and upon the estimate of it, justified in any point the sorrowful anticipations which seemed to regard the opening gates of the highest education for women as the flood-gates of a torrent of evils which should sweep away the loveliness and grace and essential charm of womanhood? Since Vassar opened its door a quarter of a century ago, has there been a marked tendency among American women to abandon domestic life and to attempt occupations for which they are not fitted? Or, to state it to you *ad feminam*, is it true that upon the gates of this college must be written a doom as mournful as that which the Dantean words decree? Whoever enters here, must she leave behind the fairest hope for woman or for man? Is that the curse of Paradise, the endless price of the fatal apple?

Truth and experience laugh the question to scorn, and scatter the cloud of foolish rhetoric about the sphere and duty and capacity and divine intention of woman, as if upon that particular subject men were in the counsels of the Almighty and women were carefully excluded. There is no surer sign of a more liberal civilization and a wiser world than the perception

that the bounds of legitimate womanly interest and activity are not to be set by men, as heretofore, to mark their own convenience and pleasure. The tradition of the lovely incapacity of woman reflects either the sensitive apprehension or the ignoble abasement of man. The progressive amelioration of the laws that have always restricted her equality of right, the enlarging range of her industrial occupations, and the vanishing of prejudices and follies of opinion that once seemed insuperable, these are now the signs in the heavens.

And perhaps in some sense more persuasive and conclusive than these, is the verdict of literature, which unconsciously records the highest and final judgment of an age. The women of to-day, as depicted by the genius of the philosophical historian and artist of current society whom we call novelist, is a very different figure from the woman of the eighteenth-century novel. Indeed, that novel was not written for her. She was not expected to read it, and if we fancy Cowper and Mrs. Unwin reading "Tom Jones" and "Amelia," we only see that Mrs. Unwin was very unlike the educated matron of to-day; while in Goldsmith's "Vicar," the purest idyl of them all, we still hear the tone of the time, the thin refrain of the baby-house in the nursery, "Your best, your sweetest empire is to please." It is a fresher air, a sweeter music that breathe through the English novel of to-day, and it is in the literature of the English tongue as in the feeling of the English-speaking race, that we must look for the true contemporaneous position of woman.

All these things are the happy harbingers of the tran-

quil and conclusive adjustment of what Margaret Fuller nearly fifty years ago called the great lawsuit of man against men, woman against women. It is a case called long since in the highest court of justice and appealed from age to age. But observe how curiously the plain good sense of Matthew Vassar, in 1862, responds to the words of the most learned and accomplished woman of her time in America twenty years before. The demand of woman, she said with proud and subtle scorn, is not poetic incense; every woman can receive that from her lover. It is not life-long sway; every woman by becoming a coquette, a shrew, or a good cook, can secure that. It is not money nor notoriety nor badges of authority. These may be sometimes sought by women, but they are not the demand of woman. Her demand is, "for that which is the birthright of every being capable to receive it: the freedom, the religious, the intelligent freedom of the universe; to use its means, to learn its secret as far as nature has enabled her, with God alone for her guide and her judge." In these words Margaret Fuller said nothing which Matthew Vassar did not say. But they were mutually unknown. Probably he had never heard her name, and she was dead long before his name was known. But when the word and act of such a man unconsciously confirm the thought of such a woman, it is because the common-sense of man apprehends the deepest and most essential feeling of woman. Her feeling is not that of a goddess nor of a houri, whatever their feelings may be, but that of a human being. In a few simple words the whole woman-ques-

tion was solved by the clear-minded man and the thoughtful woman.

It was before she had written the paper, while she was yet a young woman, that, as a boy in Providence, where she had come to be a teacher in a classical school, supporting herself and her brothers whom she educated, I first saw Margaret Fuller. She was already the friend of scholars and famous men and noble women, and her wit and wisdom and extraordinary accomplishment easily dominated the brilliant society of the city. She was a woman of delightful humor and gayety of manner; and as it was said of Burns that the charm of his conversation called travellers at the inn from their beds at midnight to listen, I have heard Margaret Fuller keep a company of young persons on a journey constantly enthralled by her racy wit and humorous intelligence. A scholar, a critic, a thinker, a teacher—above all, a person of delicate insight and sympathy—of the utmost feminine refinement of feeling and of dauntless spiritual courage, she seems to me still the figure of Woman in the Nineteenth Century, which was the title of her best-known paper.

Daughters of Vassar, such is the woman, I doubt not, whom Matthew Vassar vaguely foresaw when his generous heart inspired him to his noble task. It is the woman who, as a lofty ideal, presides over the studious hours and quiet meditations of these halls. It is the woman of the nineteenth century whom the other centuries foretold. The old times, indeed, were good, but the new times are better. We have left woman as a slave with Homer and Pericles; we have

left her as a foolish goddess with chivalry and Don Quixote; we have left her as a toy with Chesterfield and the club; and in the enlightened American daughter, wife, and mother, in the free American home, we find the fairest flower and the highest promise of American civilization.

XVIII

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION IN ALBANY, JULY 9, 1890

THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

THE grace of our summer is the literary festival. In the midst of pursuits remote from letters and science the Commencement season calls us from the market and the shop, and for one happy day blends the delight of intellectual communion with the culminating beauty of the year. As members of this convocation we are members of a university. But we stand in no college halls, we are touched by no local associations, we exchange no greetings of old classmates, we share no fond traditions. What then is the significance of our assembly? What is the University that draws us hither?

The University of the State of New York is one of the oldest institutions in the State, but none of so great importance is so little known. Its regents, or governing body, are elected by the Legislature with the same circumstance that attends the election of senators of the United States, a dignity which attests the original conception of the gravity and public value of their function, and the chief executive officers of the State are associated with them in the discharge of their duties. The nineteen chairs of the regents, if not filled always by

immortals like those of the French Academy, have been occupied by some of the most eminent citizens of New York. Every chair is ennobled by a long line of distinguished occupants, and the line is preserved by continuous succession. John Jay first sat in the chair in which I sit, then the older Gulian Verplanck, then James Kent. Each of my colleagues traces a kindred ancestry of his chair, and, contemplating the men whom he succeeds, each acknowledges with me that, in the truest sense, *noblesse oblige*.

The names of illustrious men are the eulogies of those who bear them and the inspiration of those who follow. George Clinton, who was the first chancellor, and Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Philip Schuyler, Egbert Benson, John Morin Scott, Pierre Van Cortlandt, Brockholst Livingston, Richard Varick, James Duane, Morgan Lewis, Abraham Yates, John Lansing, are among the earliest regents of the University and the most honored citizens of New York. Elected by the Legislature, in which the majority is determined by political sympathy, the conditions of the nomination and election of the regents bring within the range of party politics an action which should be absolutely independent of politics. But the highest tribute to the Board of Regents is the truth that, although every member is elected by a party vote, yet at the door of their council-chamber party vanishes and politics disappear. I believe that the Board of Regents of the University is the only important official body in this State elected by a strictly party vote which in its action is entirely independent of party, and I have heard no complaint

that for that reason its action is less efficient or less satisfactory.

But, notwithstanding the dignity of its origin, the character of its regents, and the constantly increasing importance of its service, the University has long been and still is singularly unknown to the great multitude of our fellow-citizens. The popular idea of a regent, fifty years ago, was that of a venerable figure, either bald or gray-headed, of irreproachable respectability and inexpressible pomp of manner, whose tottering steps were aided by a gold-headed cane, whose mysterious office was uncomprehended, if not incomprehensible, and whose aspect altogether might suggest a fossilized functionary of the paleozoic period. The poet Halleck, the gay laureate of the little city of New York seventy years ago, reflecting the popular fancy of the time, winged one of the *Croaker's* airy shafts of satire at the regents. A few months since, upon my election to the chancellorship, an intelligent citizen of New York, if I am justified in using precisely that adjective, asked me if my new duties would require my personal instruction of the classes in the University. Upon my amused reply he also smiled and confessed that he had heard of the institution all his life, but had never known what it was. One of the most eminent lawyers of the State begged to congratulate me upon my election and at the same time to ask where the University was situated; and when recently I was relating these two anecdotes to one of the most sagacious merchants in the city, he smiled demurely and then said modestly, "I should like to know, too." But when a son of Harvard, his sublime

head striking the stars, asked, "What is the University of the State of New York?" I could but murmur,

"Tantaene animis coelestibus"—ignorantiæ.

I felt that such bewilderment upon such a subject ought to be remedied. If it were the fault of the University, it was obviously a fault of modesty. If it were merely the ignorance of citizens of New York who ought to know better, it illustrated the imperative necessity of immediate higher education.

It is true that I speak at this moment to precisely that company of scholars and collegiate and academic teachers which at once comprises and comprehends the University. But if in speaking to you I may be overheard by those who may learn in that way, but are unlikely to learn in any other, I know that your devotion to the good cause is such that you will willingly sacrifice yourselves once more to hearing what you already know completely, in order that others may know a little.

When the last gun of the Revolution was fired, the tough old Governor of New York, George Clinton, who had fired a great many of them, saw that the whole system of education in the State was prostrate. There were no public-schools, the private schools languished, and the only college, blighted by a name of evil augury to the Sons of Liberty, had been closed during the war. The governor immediately urged the Legislature to consider practically the revival and encouragement of schools. The Legislature promptly responded, and in the first session after the war the regents of the University were incorporated as the gov-

erning body of King's College, which was to be revived under the name of Columbia, and of such other colleges as the regents might choose to establish. Some details of the scheme were amusingly crude and imperfect. There were sixty-four regents, besides those elected as representatives of religious denominations, widely scattered over the State. Meetings were very difficult, and the only duty of the cumbrous body was the care of a very small classical school. This duty included not only the employment and payment of professors from an income of not more than twelve hundred pounds, and the prescribing a system of discipline for the students, but the repairing of the college building, making the porter's lodge comfortable, buying a bell to summon the students and four cords of wood annually to warm the professors, and providing mops and dust-pans for the domestic welfare of the little college. It was a humorous disparity of means and ends, but a disparity easily remedied.

Three years later, in 1787, the Legislature authorized a revision of the law. Alexander Hamilton was that year an assemblyman, and Ezra L'Hommedieu was a senator, *O si sic omnes!* and they were both members of the committee on revision, of which Hamilton is believed to have been the controlling force. The act which they reported created the University substantially as it now exists. It is a work worthy of our foremost master of statecraft, and it is interesting to study it as an illustration of his creative public genius. Its design was simple, characteristic, and comprehensive. It forecast in the sphere of education the political organization which the Constitutional Convention of the same year applied

to the union of the States. Hamilton's report, while dealing with academic education, declared that primary schools in the State should not be left to the discretion of private citizens, but that primary instruction should be given in public schools by public authority. Under the name of the University of New York he evidently meant to include the whole system of education in the State, and to give it the vitality and vigor which result from local government under a strong, central, supervisory supremacy.

The bill reported by Hamilton's committee became law. It authorized the regents to visit and inspect all colleges, academies, and schools which were or might be established in this State, to examine into the condition of education, and to make a yearly report to the Legislature. It empowered them to confer the highest degrees and to charter colleges and academies and to promote academies to collegiate rank. The act released the regents from responsibility for the repairs and cleanliness as well as the finances and discipline of Columbia College, giving to it a certain independence of the University by reviving the original charter of 1754, but retaining in the regents the power of visitation and inspection. Although empowering the University to grant degrees, Hamilton seems to have designed it to be substantially a comprehensive State department of education. Informed of the situation and necessities of that interest by visitation, inspection, and investigation, the Board of Regents was to influence by its report the action of the Legislature. It was to be the agency and the sole agency by which

the relations of the State to education were to be conducted.

This was the original and fundamental scheme of the University of the State of New York, and, except in one point, this is included in its present scope and power. It is now the intermediary of the State, not with all the institutions and interests of education, but with those only of the higher and secondary education. The vast system of the public schools has never been placed under its control. For some time it was administered as a separate interest by the Superintendent of Common Schools, then by the Secretary of State, then by a Deputy Superintendent, and more recently, and never more ably than now, by a distinct authority, the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The State has preferred this division of powers, and there is no clash or friction between the two departments. Soon after my election as regent it seemed to me that a return was desirable to the original design of Hamilton, and that the relations of the State to education should be intrusted to a single authority. But, after long observation and reflection, I have come to doubt whether Hamilton himself would now advise a change. As a statesman Hamilton was of the school of Burke, which is distinctively that of the English political genius. In his plea for conciliation with the colonies, Burke said to Parliament, with that magnificence of utterance which has made his great speeches not only historical events, but splendid possessions of literature, the question is not whether we have the right to tax the colonies, for right is a phrase upon which men differ, but, under all the colonial

circumstances and conditions, is it wise to tax them or to allege an abstract right which it is inexpedient to enforce? Parliament thought it was, and Daniel Webster wisely said, therefore, that the American Revolution was fought upon a preamble.

The relations of the State to education in New York have been determined, according to the genius of our race and of Anglo-Saxon institutions, by experience and the sense of the public welfare. In accordance with that genius they should be changed or modified only to secure a greater benefit, not to satisfy consistency or a logical requirement. Abstractly, Hamilton might say, a single agency would seem to be better adapted for the management of those relations; but the practical question with an existing situation is not how it might have been different, but whether, as it is, change would improve it. The problem of what might have been is always insoluble.

The State has established a system of supervision for colleges and academies and higher institutions of learning. It has been tested by long experience, and it cannot wisely be changed until it is shown that a proposed change, under all the circumstances, would secure a better performance of the duty. But I doubt if any department of the State service is more efficiently, economically, and satisfactorily discharged than that which is confided to the regents of the University. Your house may be of odd design and grotesque proportions, lacking both unity and symmetry; but if it be comfortable, spacious, and convenient, if some romance of time, some charm of tradition, invest it, you would

be hardly a wise man if you pulled it down merely because originally it might have been a Palladian mansion or modelled from the Parthenon.

While the original powers of the University were great, the satisfaction of the State with the service of the regents is shown by the enlargement of those powers. In 1846 they were made trustees of the State Library and of certain local law libraries. The next year they were created trustees of the State Museum of Natural History. They are authorized, at their discretion, to confer the highest honorary degrees, to appoint boards of medical examiners, and on their recommendation to confer the degree of M.D. They hold examinations and grant certificates preliminary to legal studies, and in all the academies they hold examinations which determine the standards of academic instruction in New York. They are custodians of the historical documents of the State and of certain legislative documents. They maintain a duplicate department of documents, and conduct the publication and distribution of State works of the highest scientific character, and they have charge of the investigation of the condition of the State boundaries and of restoring the monuments along the line. Finally, after more than a century, the Legislature of 1889 attested the confidence of the State in the discretion and fidelity of the regents by the passage of an act defining the purpose, powers, and organization of the University, and still further confirming and enlarging its scope and authority. From all the institutions subject to their visitation the regents may require an annual report under

oath, and for sufficient cause they may alter, amend, or repeal the charter of any institution of the University, that is to say, of any incorporated college, university, academy, school, library, or museum in the State of New York.

It is plain from this sketch that the University of the State of New York is wholly unlike the institutions generally known as universities. It is not, as its name seems to import, a school of instruction with the traditions, associations, and imperishable local charms of personal feeling and romance with which a college is invested. It is not a western Bologna or Salamanca or Paris, nor a Berlin, Heidelberg, or Bonn. It is, in fact, the sole example of what President Gilman describes as a supervisory university. Its powers include the crowning authority of the familiar university, that of conferring degrees, but they do not include the influence of college residence and the opportunity of a faculty of instruction. Its chancellor is not the president of a body of teachers, but the chairman of a board of trustees.

Undoubtedly the name university has been the source of much confusion and perplexity. Universities are of many kinds, but the general significance of the name is indisputable and determined. Some of my predecessors have indulged a pleasing fancy of an organic resemblance between this institution and the older European universities. But this seems to me wholly illusory and, under the circumstances, mischievous. Our institution is possessed of powers so large and definite, and its opportunities of service to education and to

the State are so extraordinary, that it need not foster any illusions nor acquiesce in any pleasing misconception. To speak of a European university of the older type, of Salerno, of Pavia, of Paris, of Oxford, is to summon the vision of a great school thronged by multitudes of students, and taught by famous professors. Bologna was distinctively a school of law; Salerno, of medicine; Paris, of philosophy or the arts; but they were first of all schools of instruction. Great teachers made great universities by attracting great hosts of pupils and investing the school with the authority and renown of superior scholarship. The eminence of teachers is the essential characteristic which, in the general understanding of the word, a university has never lost.

The English university, which, I think, our own is thought to resemble, differs somewhat from those of the Continent. Oxford and Cambridge, from whose revered shades so many of the earliest fathers of this country came—as the principal of the youngest college at Oxford recently said, "Puritan Cambridge was the mother of New England"—are clusters of venerable and historic buildings standing in an atmosphere of calm, within the pensive shadow of immemorial trees. An English university is a system of adjacent colleges, separate in discipline and, within a certain range, in instruction, but united in a common life, a common fame, a proud and ancient tradition. Milton was of Christ's, Sir Isaac Newton of Trinity, Gray of Pembroke, but they were all of Cambridge. Wolsey was of Magdalen, Hooker of Corpus Christi, Shelley of University College,

but their fame is Oxford's. Each college has its tutors and its deans, its own library and chapel, its lecture-rooms and dining-hall, but all members of all the colleges are members of the University and subject to its government and laws. They all attend the lectures of the University professors. The University holds the public examinations, the University confers the degrees. The mainspring of the system as regards education, says Goldwin Smith, formerly professor of history at Oxford, lies in the University examinations for the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The distinction of Philippa Fawcett this summer is not that of a college at Cambridge; it is that she has surpassed the senior wrangler, the best mathematician of all the colleges, and won the highest honor of the University and the year.

If the University of the State of New York should hold examinations for the Bachelor's degree, undoubtedly so far it would exercise a power like that of Oxford. But it would not be the students of Syracuse and Hobart and St. Lawrence, of Ingham, St. Johns, and St. Stephen's, whom it would examine; and Columbia, Cornell, Union, and Hamilton would not be related in the University of the State like Baliol, Merton, and Oriel at Oxford, or Trinity, Caius, and Kings at Cambridge. It is but the illusion of a name which seems to identify with the English universities and to invest with their romantic glamour the University of the State of New York. The University requires no residence, for it has no halls. It gives no instruction, for it has no teachers. It holds no examinations of the students of its colleges, for its colleges prescribe their own examinations and

confer their own degrees. Let us renounce the unnecessary fiction to which much misapprehension concerning this University is due. It is the bright will-o'-the-wisp of a name, the bewildering endeavor to find somewhere on the heights of the Hudson or the meadows of the Mohawk or the Susquehanna a visible and storied pile of ivied wall and ancient tower, some loitering group of Sidneys glad to learn, some Wickliffe, More, or Newton ripe to teach, but an endeavor everywhere baffled and vain, that makes the regents the futile potentates of a shadowy realm, the impotent masters of a school of ghosts.

It is true, indeed, that in busy streets and peaceful fields and on happy heights of the imperial State are colleges belonging to the University and quick with the college life and traditions at once so dear and so influential in thousands of hearts and lives. But the University itself is invested with no more romance than the Department of Public Instruction. It is the agency by which the State conducts its relations with the whole system of secondary education in the commonwealth. Yet it is much more than a mere supervisory agency. Like that kindred department it has two great but different functions. One is the management of the immense system of detail of academic administration; the other comprehends its noblest public duty and responsibility as the stimulating heart of a constantly enlarging and progressive educational life. The University acts directly upon the academies, indirectly upon the colleges. Its action upon the academies lies in the system of preliminary and advanced examinations and

the detailed discussions of the convocation. This action, if vigilant and wise, assures the constant elevation of the standard of academic instruction, making the distribution of State aid dependent upon conformity to the requirements of rigid but reasonable examinations.

The value of this service of the examinations is attested by my own experience as a regent. In the year 1863, the year before the establishment of the preliminary examinations and fifteen years before the advanced examinations were instituted, the first convocation was held, a deliberative assembly of the officers of the colleges and academies of the State, which has now grown to this important and imposing congress. At that convocation I asked the teacher of one of the largest academies how many pupils he had sent up to college that year. He answered twelve; and when I asked if they went to New York colleges, he answered, "Ten to New York and one each to Harvard and Yale, and I am prouder of those two than of the other ten." Those few words were a comprehensive and exhaustive commentary on the condition of academic education in New York. That was twenty-seven years ago. But I do not believe that there is a single principal in the convocation to-day who need make such a statement or who would be disposed to make it, and the difference of the situation is due to the initiative of the University. Devoted, accomplished, and able principals throughout the State might raise the standard in single academies. But the comprehension of all the academies in itself enables the University to raise the standard of the

whole academic system, and to advance the character and renown of secondary education in New York.

The influence of the University upon the colleges lies in this heightened standard of preliminary academic instruction, providing for the college more advanced and riper pupils. It lies also in the deliberations of this convocation, which is an assembly unknown in other States. In no other State do teachers and officers of colleges and academies meet annually to confer upon the condition and progress, the aims and principles, the spirit and methods, of secondary and higher education. The comparison of experience, the result of individual thought, the discussion of experimental measures, the consideration of academic and college policy in its largest sense—for instance, the fair demand and due degree of physical culture in the college course, its conditions and relations; all radical departures from ancient tradition such as shortening the collegiate term now under consideration by Harvard and Columbia; the relative importance of the classic and the scientific curriculum in the college course; degrees and the suitable authority to grant them—indeed, the whole range of the imperial and vital public interest of secondary education is the province of this convocation. But its actual influence upon the colleges does not depend upon the opportunity, but upon the use of the opportunity. Columbia, Cornell, Union, and Colgate, Vassar and Hamilton and Rochester and all their sister schools will heed when they hear what is worth heeding. The University in convocation will affect the college policy when it speaks with an authority which is not perfunctory, but

of a wisdom that is felt to be superior. The voice of Harvard commands the attention of the college world, not because it is our oldest university, but because experience has shown that it speaks only after wise observation and careful reflection. A thousand smatterers may speculate unheard upon language or upon a Greek pediment or particle or a Latin phrase; but when Whitney speaks at Yale, Goodwin or Norton at Harvard, Drisler at Columbia, Lincoln or Harkness at Brown, every student in every college turns to listen.

The influence of this University upon the colleges of the State is now possible in a much more direct and fundamental form than ever before. Without the advantage of college residence, which I have described as integral in the familiar conception of a university, and which many a graduate tenderly feels to have been the chief value of his college course, this institution may now bring the benefits of college instruction and the incitements of the collegiate degree to every studious youth in the State of New York. It may do for every such youth what the London University, which has no "distant spires," no "antique towers," does for every young man who submits to its examinations. The lecturers of the London University, indeed, are a body of the most eminent masters in letters and science. But it does not require residence in any particular place nor attendance upon the lectures or recitations of any special teachers; it requires for its degree only success in its examinations. But those examinations are thorough and severe, and the degree of the London University

is a certificate of scholarly attainment not less than that of Oxford and Cambridge.

The authority of this University to extend the range of collegiate instruction and the benefit of the collegiate degrees is not derived from its powers of visitation and inspection, but from the law which authorizes the regents "to maintain lectures connected with higher education in this State," and to "establish examinations as to attainments in learning, and award and confer suitable certificates, diplomas, and degrees on persons who satisfactorily meet the requirements prescribed." Here is full authority to undertake the work which is called university extension, a work not unknown in this country, and which in England has produced remarkable results. By lectures and correspondence and counsel the English universities stretch their beneficent hands throughout the kingdom and everywhere quicken into life dormant or aspiring intelligence or capacity. The polytechnic institutes in London, the ragged schools, the People's Palace, with the University extension and the civil-service examinations, are the hopeful signs of English civilization to-day, like the penal, prison, and sanitary reforms at the beginning of the century. They all reveal the activity of that deepening human sympathy which has heard in the garden of the world the voice not to be evaded, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" which knows that hiding will not avail, and that the question must be answered.

This power of maintaining lectures, holding examinations, and granting degrees, without residence under its jurisdiction or instruction by teachers of its own, while

it brings this University so far directly into the fraternity of colleges, invests it with immense responsibility. Plainly an unwise exercise of the power would precipitate a jealous conflict between the University and the colleges. The power might be grossly misused by cheapening the degree, to the detriment of sound learning, the degradation of higher education, and the shame of the University and the State. But great powers are granted to those who have shown themselves worthy of great responsibilities, and there need be no more apprehension of an abuse of the authority of examinations and degrees by the University than by Columbia or Union or Cornell or any university or college in the State which now holds similar powers. Any exercise of this great authority which should belittle and debase instead of enhancing the value of a degree, would justify the withdrawal from the University of a trust which it had betrayed.

The fitting time and method for the exercise of this power should be determined with great deliberation. The purpose would be the extension of the incitement to higher study which is offered by the opportunity of securing a degree. Collegiate residence is within the reach of comparatively few of the American youth who with opportunity would eagerly qualify themselves for a degree. There is no nobler, more touching, or more characteristic American story than that of the family which gladly spares its comfort, which stints and almost starves, that the studious son may go to college. It is a generous sacrifice, by which the family, the boy, and the country are all gainers. This is the spirit which

has made us what we are. But many such sons, unable to go to college, master in solitary study the knowledge which the college certifies with a degree. If the University can bring the degree to that solitary student, ought it to be withheld for want of residence? If the degree be regarded as a certificate of attainment in study acquired in four years, ought it to be denied to equal attainments acquired in three or two years? If, again, the Bachelor's degree now certifies a certain personal experience and training derived from collegiate residence not less than proficiency in study, should there be a new degree for the external student, who, like Charles Lamb, has not fed upon "the sweet food of academic institution"? These are questions which should be answered.

Yet in such new paths our steps may well be wary. Their besetting dangers are superficiality, a counterfeit scholarship, a shallow smattering instead of thorough knowledge, mental effeminacy, and smirking intellectual pretence. If, indeed, to extend the University were necessarily to attenuate and lower the standard of the education it represents, extension should be left to other agencies. But, with due care, I see no more reason for apprehending this result than that the exterior examinations of Harvard and Yale will be less rigorous than those within the college halls.

From what has been said it is plain that while this University is like no other, and although its name may easily perplex speculation, it is an educational institution of vast powers and opportunities, and consequently of extraordinary responsibilities. Like all such public

trusts, its administration may decline into a mere perfunctory observance of routine or it may produce the highest public benefit. The choice between these alternatives will depend upon the hearty co-operation both in spirit and purpose, of the central authority and of the widespread and independent collegiate and academic membership of the University. While the regents are the trustees elected by the representatives of the people who confer a trust, this convocation is the representative body of the various institutions of which the University consists. This is the congress of higher education in New York. It should speak the thought of New York upon this cardinal interest of a free country, and to its deliberations the whole country should turn to ascertain whether, upon the fundamental questions of educational life and progress, it has anything to learn from the Empire State, or whether New York is imperial only in extent and population, in natural resources and material prosperity.

The credential—I might say, in view of the ultimate purpose of the convocation, the highest credential—of every member is not derived from his office as a teacher, but from his profound conviction as a man of the grandeur of the intellectual life. As an American citizen, he comes here with no deference to any other interest. The scholar bows to the superior intelligence, if such it be, but not to the money of Crœsus. Leigh Hunt said, with fine democracy of feeling, "I thought that my Horace and Demosthenes gave me a right to sit at table with any man, and I think so still." If our convictions did not assure us of the essential value of

intellectual pursuits and possessions, history constantly illustrates it. It is a pleasant anecdote of the banker Fugger, who received Charles V. as his guest in his palace at Augsburg, and lighted a fire with Charles's bond of a million florins to warm his majesty's hands. In an hour the fire was out, and banker and emperor and empire are long since gone. But John Milton, the poor, blind school-master, kindled an immortal flame of poesy which still cheers the human heart. "The garners of Sicily," said Lowell to the sons of Harvard on the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the college—"the garners of Sicily are empty now, but the bees from all climes still fetch honey from the tiny garden-plots of Theocritus."

We never tire of our fond and familiar tale of American progress and development. We are nationally a little moon-struck by that resplendent orb which

> "nightly to the listening earth
> Repeats the story of her birth."

We cannot enough recount the miracles of our growth. In the very first year of the century, when they were but beginning, Gouverneur Morris said, "Calculation outruns fancy and fact baffles calculation." We are naturally dazzled by the splendors of our inventive genius, by our industrial accumulations, and the marvellous display of human energy that within so short a time has transformed a trackless continent into the smooth highway of triumphant civilization, outdoing the Roman empire in the world-wide plenitude of its power by as much as human freedom and happiness are better

than human subjection and mere dominion. But, amid the exaltation and coronation of material success, let this University here annually announce in words and deeds the dignity and superiority of the intellectual and spiritual life, and strengthen itself to resist the insidious invasion of that life by the superb and seductive spirit of material prosperity. It is a spirit which spares neither trade nor profession, neither politics nor morals. Let us withstand it by the spirit which we cultivate here, the clear perception of the true end of education that inspires our work, whether in college, school, museum, academy, or library. "Universities," said John Stuart Mill twenty-three years ago, "universities are not intended to teach the knowledge required to fit men for some special mode of gaining their livelihood. . . . Education makes a man a more intelligent shoemaker, if that be his occupation, but not by teaching him to make shoes; it does so by the mental exercise it gives and the habits it impresses."

The highest gift of education is not the mastery of sciences, for which special schools are provided, but noble living, generous character, the spiritual delight which springs from familiarity with the loftiest ideals of the human mind, the spiritual power which saves every generation from the intoxication of its own success. A triumphant prosperity and a socialism which anticipates the millennium from legislative acts and ingenious organization, forgetting that the kingdom of God is within you, instinctively aim to bend the college to their own uses. They tempt it to train chemists, engineers, metallurgists, specialists in every science,

not for the higher, but for the lower value of knowledge; not to supply delights more precious than riches, but to teach the open sesame of a surer and swifter way to wealth. But even in literature it is a poor education which ends in accurate grammar and precision of metres instead of a love of letters, and Agassiz spoke for the scholar in science when he was besought for the reward of a fortune to enter the service of a company, and answered, "I have no time to make money."

You will not understand me as depreciating special training for the readier development and finer adaptation of natural resources and natural forces to the welfare of man. I am speaking only of the spirit in which the cause committed to us should be served, and of the life, not the learning, which is the consummate flower of education. I have heard it said that liberal education does not promote success in life. A chimney-sweep might say so. Without education he could gain the chimney-top, poor little blackamoor! brandish his brush, and sing his song of escape from soot to sunshine. But the ideal of success measures the worth of the remark that it may be attained without liberal education. If the accumulation of money be the standard, we must admit that a man might make a fortune in a hundred ways without education. But he could make a fortune, also, without purity of life or noble character or religious faith. A man can pay much too high a price for money, and not every man who buys it knows its relative value with other possessions. Undoubtedly Ezra Cornell and Matthew Vassar did not go to college, and they succeeded in life. But

their success, what was it? Where do you see it now? Surely not in their riches, but in the respect that tenderly cherishes their memory because, knowing its inestimable value, they gave to others the opportunity of education which had been denied to them. Let us make their lofty spirit the spirit of the University. Remembering that the great ministry of education is not to make the body more comfortable, but the soul happier, may the University, in all its departments and activities, cherish and promote education, not for its lower uses, but for its higher influences.

XIX

EDUCATION AND LOCAL PATRIOTISM

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE KINGSTON ACADEMY, KINGSTON, N. Y., JUNE 25, 1891

EDUCATION AND LOCAL PATRIOTISM

No citizen of New York can come without emotion to this ancient town. Its charm does not lie only or chiefly in its neighborhood to the stately stream of which we are justly proud, the most historic of American rivers, but in the contribution which Kingston has made to its historic riches. Here the constituted State of New York began. Here its Revolutionary fathers John Jay, Gouverneur Morris, Robert R. Livingston, John Morin Scott, James Duane, Abraham Yates, John Sloss Hobart, with their brethren, organized for New York the independence which the united colonies were winning, each for itself and all for the whole. Hither from the field came George Clinton long enough to take the oath as the first governor of the State, then returned to camp to withstand, in vain, the advance of the British, whose fiery hand of vengeance fell upon Kingston, which was then the third community in size and importance in the commonwealth. The tale of those days is heroic and inspiring, and in the proud story the part of this town is secure. Seven cities claimed the glory of the birthplace of Homer. But no rival contests with Kingston the renown that invests

the birthplace of the first, free, popular constitution of the State of New York.

The story cannot be told too often nor the names of the fathers of the State become too familiar. At the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the surrender of Burgoyne—another of the imperishable traditions of the Hudson — Governor Horatio Seymour said to me that New England had done wisely in always carefully celebrating her great events and commemorating her great men. I could not help replying that New England was fortunate in producing great men who naturally did great deeds worthy of commemoration. Such men and their deeds are the precious treasures of every community, and no community is wise which suffers the renown of its heroes and its heroic actions to sink into neglect and forgetfulness. Their commemoration stimulates public spirit, and public spirit, not private wealth, is the mainspring of the American Republic. Governor Seymour was evidently contrasting New York and New England. It was the implication of his words that the annals of New York showed men as eminent and events as important as those of New England; but that the State, with the carelessness of greatness, was heedless of their commemoration. No New-Yorker more zealously or more constantly and intelligently than Governor Seymour asserted the superiority of the State. He delighted to declare that the first constitution of New York was wiser than all the other early State constitutions, and to trace its superiority back to the Hollanders, whom he celebrated as the foremost of all civilized people when they settled

New York. But he confessed the neglect by the State of its own history, and such neglect is not compatible with the highest public spirit.

And, if the cultivation of public spirit be a patriotic duty, is it not especially the duty of New York, for the very reason that the conditions of the State from the beginning have not been favorable to its development? Homogeneity of population is one of the cardinal conditions of an active public spirit, and New York has been always the most cosmopolitan of American States. The impulse of its original settlement was commercial, and the commercial spirit gave its beginnings a good-natured liberality and tolerance which were not found among the English pilgrims to a strange country who, for the sake of conscience, had abandoned their dear motherland and all its fond and familiar traditions. The settlers of Massachusetts Bay, with relentless vigor of legislation, sought to found a Puritan commonwealth, and the magistrate warned those who were not Puritans to settle elsewhere. But the Hollanders invited men of all nations and creeds to settle in New Netherlands. Before the city of New York was known by that name, the historian tells us that thirteen languages were spoken in its streets. The report of a gun fired in the harbor would have echoed among half a dozen little communities around the bay, sprung from as many different nationalities, dwelling in amity. But in Plymouth or in Boston or Salem a voice of alien tone would have arrested the jealous attention of the authorities, and the hapless stranger would have been summoned to explain his heretical accent. We may not blame the

Puritans. It was sifted grain that made New England, grain sifted by profound conviction, by unquailing courage, by stern self-sacrifice, by heroic persistence—sifted grain which has sprung into the most marvellous harvest in history.

But while every early New-Englander was but an Old-Englander made over, the fathers of New York were of various blood. When the convention sat here and organized the State, Jay was by descent a Frenchman, Morris a Welshman, Livingston a Scotchman, Clinton an Irishman, Herkimer of Oriskany a German, Hoffman a Swede, and, in political genius the greatest of New-Yorkers, Alexander Hamilton, was a British West-Indian. This diversity of national origin in the settlement and leadership of New York long before the great immigration began was in this sense fortunate that, as its chief city and seaport was the gate through which Europe entered America, it was not a strait gate nor did it open upon a narrow way. The membership of the first constitutional convention at Kingston, in which at least six different nationalities participated, forecast the cosmopolitan New York of to-day. But the different public spirit of a homogeneous and a heterogeneous community, in the same country and animated by the same general purpose, is illustrated by the fact that when New England, by the voice of John Adams, was demanding independence, New York, by the lips of John Jay, was asking for one more appeal to the king. So, also, when the king's troops were forced out of Boston in the first year of the war, they came to New York and occupied it until the British standard in the city

was lowered never to be raised again. These facts show no lack of patriotism, but only its slower movement. They arrest the interest and curiosity of the student of public spirit, and he finds the explanation in the difference between a community sprung from a single national stock and one which is blended of many nationalities.

Public spirit, I say, is the mainspring of the republic, and as public spirit is the virtue which seeks the general welfare and not a mere private or personal advantage, it implies educated intelligence. The instinct which prompted our fathers in America at once to establish schools was the forecast of the republic. The vital condition of popular government is an educated people, and schools are both the seed and the fruit, the cause and the consequence, of public spirit. The two great neighbors, New England and New York, will always banter each other upon their relative primacy in American development. Happily it is a war of the roses without the thorns. It is a playful contention to determine which was the elder son and heir-apparent of liberty. In race they had a common part in historic glory. The revolt of the Netherlands against Spain, which shattered Charles V.'s dream of universal empire, the war between the English Parliament and English crown, and the struggle of the American colonies with the British sovereignty, were all successive and culminating campaigns in the mighty contest of the modern world for constitutional liberty, and Holland began it. George Washington was but a later captain in the same invincible army in which William of Orange

served, and the United States of Holland were the forerunners in spirit and instinct of the United States of America.

Kingston was essentially a Dutch town. Here the traditions of Holland lingered, distinguishing the character of the community and moulding its life. Among the most vital and venerable of Dutch traditions is the school or public education, and in the friendly controversy between New England and New York, each claims that its fatherland was the cradle of the public school. It is one of those happy contentions, like that between Virginia and Massachusetts of colonial precedence in Revolutionary patriotism, which can never be determined, because neither community will concede that it was not the first.

But there are two indisputable sources of pride for every son and daughter of Holland in the history of education. The patriarch of the house of Nassau, Count John, the elder brother of the great William, exhorted his sons and nephews three centuries ago to urge upon the States-General the establishment of free schools as the highest service possible for God and Christianity, and especially for the Netherlands themselves. "Soldiers and patriots thus educated," said the count, "with a true knowledge of God and a Christian conscience; item, churches and schools, good libraries, books and printing-presses, are better than all armies, arsenals, armories, munitions, alliances, and treaties that can be had or imagined in the world." The New England historian of the New Netherlands, in whose noble work the latest generation of the Pilgrims pays magnifi-

cent homage to the country which sheltered them, says that it was the Dutch system of common schools which the Pilgrims transplanted to America that has become the chief safeguard and the peculiar glory of our own republic. This is one of the just sources of pride for the sons of Holland in America, and for this ancient town as a faithful outpost of the Dutch tradition.

The other event to which I allude is the familiar and immortal story of Leyden. There is nothing finer in the annals of patriotism than the spectacle of the people of starving Leyden, long besieged and apparently hopeless of succor, ravaged by pestilence and reduced to the direst extremity, opening the dikes that let in the ocean upon the Spaniards, like the Red Sea upon the hosts of Pharaoh, and crying with pinched lips but undaunted hearts, as they saw the ruin of their fields and homes, "Better a drowned land than a lost land." What prouder proof could there be of the essential nobility of nature which inspired that deed than that the monument decreed by the people of Holland for this great salvation was not a commercial exchange nor a column of victory nor a statue of a hero, but the University of Leyden? No wonder that to that city the English Pilgrims, on their way to become fathers of freedom in the new world, came to receive the benediction of the sons of liberty in the old world. In the truest sense, the Pilgrim Fathers took their degrees at Leyden, and New England graduated in Holland.

I recall these events because it is to men to whom these traditions were native, to those who brought to the new world the wisdom of the old, to those who had

learned by the history of the country from which they were descended that public spirit is the basis of republican government, and that educated intelligence supplies public spirit, that we owe the foundation of the Kingston Academy. In 1774 a body of trustees, whose family names attest their Dutch lineage, established the Academy, "for the instruction of youth in the learned languages and other branches of knowledge." It began its peaceful course just as the Revolution was beginning. From this tranquil rural seclusion the city of New York was then far away, and the sounds of the opening war were wafted hither softened and remote. In the year that the Academy was opened, the New York Assembly had appointed a committee of correspondence; the people of the city had emptied the tea-chests of the *Nancy* into the river; the Sons of Liberty had sent to Boston the recommendation for a general Congress; an immense meeting had been held in the Fields, now the City Hall Park of New York, where Alexander Hamilton made his first speech; the office of Rivington's *Gazetteer*, the Tory organ, had been destroyed; and Hamilton had published his first essay arguing the cause of America. In the same year, also, the first Continental Congress, suggested by New York, met in Philadelphia, and John Jay of New York wrote its famous Declaration of Rights, and in the next year Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain boys began the war in New York by capturing the stronghold of Ticonderoga in the name of the Great Jehovah and Continental Congress.

The Revolution had begun, and, amid the increasing

storm of war, just withdrawn from the river whose control was the tactical object of the early military operations, daily the bell of the little Academy rang, and ingenuous youth were instructed in the learned languages and other branches of knowledge. But in its third year the desolation of war reached the town and the Academy. In 1777 the proud and confident Burgoyne, on a brilliant June morning, began his march from Canada, which he said would be but a pleasant promenade to the sea. To meet him on his way, to welcome the victorious general and escort him in triumph to the bay, Sir Henry Clinton advanced up the Hudson from New York. He captured the river forts, burst through the boom and chain at West Point, sailed into Newburgh Bay on the very morning of Burgoyne's disastrous defeat, and gayly sent him word, "Here we are, nothing between us and Albany."

Clinton burned Kingston, and in the general conflagration the Academy was destroyed, "a disaster," says the simple story, "which necessarily suspended instruction for a time." It was but a symbol of the fate which had befallen education throughout the State. The only college in New York was then King's College, now Columbia, and the war closed its doors as ruthlessly and effectually as it closed those of Kingston Academy. In his first message after the end of the war, on the 21st of January, 1784, Governor George Clinton mentioned as one of its deplorable consequences the neglect of education, and he assured the Legislature that it had no more important duty than the revival and encouragement of seminaries of learning. Two days afterwards the Legis-

lature responded by the appointment of a committee to bring in a bill for the establishment of seminaries and schools, and a month later the bill was introduced to create the Board of Regents, a body evidently designed to discharge the duties of a general State board of education. Elsewhere in the State schools began to revive. This town began to repair the disasters of war, and although, after the exhaustion of the Revolution, we cannot suppose that the public pulse of a small and poor community of Dutch descent beat impetuously in its tranquil retirement, yet the public spirit which had established the school gradually prepared to reconstruct and reopen it, and on the first of December, 1792, the Academy bell rang again, the birch was doubtless hung convenient to the master's hand, and under "a gentleman," as the trustees alleged, "of competent education and abilities," the daily lessons were resumed.

Two years later, on the 5th of January, 1795, the trustees applied to the regents for a charter, and the Academy was duly incorporated in an instrument attested by George Clinton, chancellor, and De Witt Clinton, secretary. Both of these names are identified with the town, for here the chancellor had been inaugurated as governor, and the secretary had been a pupil of the Academy. In June, 1795, the trustees assembled at the Academy and assumed their charge. It was unanimously ordained that "there shall be taught in this Academy the Greek and Latin languages, elementary and practical geometry, mathematics, logic, moral and natural philosophy, ancient history, and the history and government of the United States." It is a comprehensive

scheme which would easily include all the studies that are pursued here to-day, and the regulations of instruction, visitations, and semi-annual examinations in the presence of the trustees and the public show the purpose and spirit of the government of the Academy. It is pleasant to observe in this modest American town the same feeling which made high holiday in Greece of the days when the poets recited at the games. It was in spirit the same tribute to the genius of literature which was paid by the ancient people, in whom the instinct and creative power of literature and art were most profound and active.

Here in Kingston the days of the Academy examinations were the great days of the year. Long anticipated, every preparation was made in these hospitable homes fitly to receive and entertain the guests of the rejoicing town. Amid the ringing of the village bells the Board of Trustees, escorted by the students of the Academy and preceded by music, marched to the hall where the examination was held. Then followed the public dinner, at which trustees, students, parents, and distinguished strangers sat down, and at the spring examination the festival ended by literary declamations in the Dutch church, then the only church in Kingston. In the autumn the day ended with an exhibition in the court-room, where the students spoke in dialogues, disputes, and orations. At first they also played dramatic scenes. But, whether the sombre shade of Calvin darkened over the bright Greek joyousness of those earlier days of the Academy, or the exuberance of buskined youth exceeded the serious bounds

which Dutch decorum imposed upon such occasions, in 1805 these dramatic excesses were forbidden. But still the day ended, as all such student days end, with the dance that charmed the night away and a gayety that met the morning. A few years later, on April 23, 1817, possibly because the hilarity of the guests disturbed the becoming dignity of an Academic function, or perhaps because the decline of the Academy itself involved the sad necessity, the annual dinner was discontinued.

Yet it was in 1803, only two years before the dramatic performances at the semi-annual exhibitions were suspended, that the Kingston Academy was most flourishing, and a vivid glimpse of its condition is found in an address of the trustees to the Board of Regents. Since its establishment in 1774 the Academy had employed able teachers with no other fund than the tuition money. With natural pride the trustees state that from former pupils of the Academy "can now be selected characters who have been preferred by their fellow-citizens for the important offices of a lieutenant-governor and president of the Senate, a speaker of the Assembly, a justice of the Supreme Court, a mayor of one populous city and both mayor and recorder of another, several members of the national and State legislatures, besides a number of characters eminent in their several professions of divinity, law, and physic." A few years later the trustees could have headed this honorable list with the name of the great Governor of New York whose energy and persistence gave the most effective impulse to the prosperity of

the State by making the Hudson a highway to the ocean of the riches of the West. During the eight years since its incorporation, the Academy had been visited by the regents but once, and it had received from the public treasury only two hundred dollars, which, with a voluntary gift from citizens of sixty dollars, had been expended in buying a neat set of globes, maps, mathematical apparatus, and about one hundred and thirty-two choice books for an Academy library. The principal, the Rev. David B. Warden, from the University of Glasgow, "but last from Kinderhook," with only one usher to assist him, had charge of fifty-three pupils, the largest number in any term in the annals of the Academy. Two of the pupils came from neighboring States, one from Maryland, and one from Pennsylvania. Twenty were from neighboring counties in New York; namely, one from New York, one from Westchester, one from Albany, five from Columbia, five from Greene, seven from Dutchess, and the remaining thirty-two were from Kingston's own county of Ulster. "Thus," says the address, "this nursery for science will, with the blessing of a kind Providence, spread her fruits far and wide."

These pupils, it added, are taught in all the branches contemplated when the Academy was founded, with the addition of the French language; and in the liberal administration of their trust the trustees maintain, in a large and convenient room on the first floor, an English primary school in which, generally, there are twenty-five or thirty pupils. "But these pupils," say the trustees with conscious rectitude, "are not

enumerated with the Latin students reported to the honorable regents, and which they have understood to have been the case from some neighboring seminaries, in order, they presume, thereby to receive a larger share of the bounty of the State. Be that as it may, the trustees of Kingston Academy have with pleasure observed the means adopted by the honorable Legislature for the encouragement of literature, and rest satisfied that their own exertions in this laudable undertaking will not fail to meet with every assistance in the power of a generous regency to afford them." It is not surprising that upon so candid and satisfactory an appeal, a generous regency presented to the Academy one hundred pounds, which was expended in an advance to the principal on account of his salary, in payment of a balance due to a former principal, and in buying a new bell.

The public interest in the Academy at this time was so great that the next year, before the ban fell upon the dramatic Muse and the recitations were forbidden, the trustees, encouraged by the prosperity of the Academy, proposed to found a college in the town, for which they received generous private subscriptions and a grant of real estate from the corporation. A memorial from the Academy and the town was addressed to the Board of Regents to obtain their sanction for the project, and to the Legislature asking aid. The regents expressed their satisfaction with the zeal for literature manifested by this action; but they replied with courtesy and with a truthfulness which is always timely, that the great difficulties with which colleges

already chartered in the State were struggling made the multiplication of such institutions inexpedient. The Board of Regents is not usually regarded as a humorous body, but there is a plain touch of comedy in the last words of their grave reply. "The committee also beg leave to remark that a large proportion of the subscriptions on which the said application is founded consists of Ulster and Delaware Turnpike stock, the value of which is unascertained and extremely precarious." It is to be hoped, in the interests of education in this State, that the Board of Regents have not lost the sagacity which paused at unascertained and precarious values as the financial security of schools of learning. The reasons of the regents were accepted as conclusive. But the corporation of the town, whose names might have been those of the trustees of any town in Holland, generously conveyed to the trustees of the Academy the property which they had designed for the proposed college, and by a deed of March 15, 1804, gave to the Academy eight hundred acres of land, including the present site of the school.

These are delightful glimpses of the pride and interest in education of this small and quiet village on the Hudson, three years before Fulton's first steamboat amazed its placid waters. The government of the Union had been established only fourteen years before, and I have recalled these details because such local feeling as is illustrated by the modest story of this Academy was the strength of the new national system. That feeling of local interest and pride is the strength

of our system still, and its decay in any American community would mark the decline of patriotism. This local feeling is indeed a republican instinct as well as an hereditary national tradition. Its relation to our national polity is vital, and of its careful and vigorous perpetuation a necessity. If, as Dr. Johnson said, we must take pains to keep our friendships in repair, how much more our patriotism!

The cardinal principles of the government of the Union were not new. The system of States politically united, the two legislative chambers, the elective executive, the officers holding by his appointment—all these had been known elsewhere. It was the new development of the system—the dual citizenship, the division of sovereignty, which only the greatest of civil wars conclusively interpreted for us and which other nations do not yet comprehend—that constituted its distinction, its elasticity, and its power. The wise localization of interest and local distribution of political power prevent the centralization of authority, which in Rome made a nominal republic the mask of despotism. France has hardly yet done paying the penalty of centralized power. The splendid despotism of Louis XIV. concentrated the State in the capital until the whim of Paris became the law of France. The remorseless royalty which brutalized the French people and bred the French terror was succeeded by the equally remorseless mob of Paris, which also imposed its ruthless will on France. In all the changes which swiftly followed the Revolution in that country, it was said with bitter gayety that the new government was sent down to the subject provinces by

mail from Paris, and the mail was followed by the army if the provinces did not acquiesce.

The instinct of the English-speaking race has always resisted the centralizing tendency. It knew that love of country alone is not able to maintain liberty. The people must be trained in the practical conduct of local government, and this practice avails only when the people are animated by intelligent and educated public spirit. A system of independent local governments makes in turn a State and a nation which encounter peril as a ship of many compartments meets the wildest storm. The fury of the sea may damage the vessel at one or another point; but her single hull, shaken and here and there broken though it be, with the buoyancy of a fleet triumphs over the tempest and comes safe to port.

The strength of the new American republic was to be found, if at all, not only in respect for local custom, but in the strength of local authority. Personal rights, the most precious of all, were to be secured by local power. The central authority guaranteed only the free expression of the local popular will, and left to that will so expressed the defence of primary rights. The wisdom of this system lay in its respect for the subtle forces of local feeling, custom, and tradition, which are the vital social and political forces in a community, because they are the natural expression of its character, but which are incalculable. The perilous temptation of the Convention of 1787 was to create a Procrustean system which, by enforcing uniformity, would destroy vital individuality. The single State, indeed, as an independent com-

munity, is externally impotent. But, with its local life unimpaired and its local authority efficient, its intimate union with other States makes a great nation. If wrong be done to a State, the remedy lies, where in a popular system the lawful remedy must always lie, in the general sense of justice which such a system assumes as its fundamental principle. No State makes a treaty with any other State or with any group of other States. They all combine in an organic national unity, and a blow at the Union is an assault upon every State.

The construction of the Union amid the angry conflict of jealous and mutually hostile forces was the constitutional miracle of 1787. As the great deliberation happily ended, Dr. Franklin said, "Mr. President, during these long and doubtful debates, as I have watched the symbolic sun in the painting over your seat, I have not known whether it was rising or setting, but I see at last that it is rising." If Lord Chatham praised the Continental Congress as an assembly of wise men beyond Greek or Roman fame, the Constitutional Convention suggests no other standard than itself. It blended local and national life with an instinctive wisdom which yet was not conscious of the political miracle that it had wrought. And when the very excess which it restrained, the defiant exaggeration of local authority into independent and absolute supremacy to secure an unrighteous end, struck at the organic life of the Union, the blow only revealed the Union's unsuspected and astonishing power. A union of States had grown into a nation. It was local public spirit which inspired national patriotism.

The same local spirit which made the strength of the Union founded and maintained this Academy and every similar institution throughout the country. They sprang from the conviction and the habit which make republican government possible. In the decline of such institutions appear the first signs of national decay, because that decline marks a failing public spirit. The decline of an academy in a town announces growing indifference to education which is a fundamental safeguard of free institutions, and a relaxation of local pride which is the test of healthy local life.

See how closely connected in this town are the Academy and a wholesome town-pride. If the effort to establish an academy a hundred and seventeen years ago had failed; if ninety-nine years ago the Academy had not been reopened; if you could strike from the traditions of your town those pleasant pictures of your young ancestors gayly dancing and acting in honor of the success in study of son and lover, of sweetheart and brother; if still the echoes of the rural music playing before the procession of grave trustees escorted by pupils did not linger in the town tradition, and the whole pretty pageant of the holiday dedicated to education were not part of the annals of the town, Kingston would not be so justly proud of its own history, and one well-spring of the local feeling which feeds the national life would be dried up. The modest Academy has perpetually taught the town the value of education by the spectacle of the instinctive honor with which the functions of the Academy were treated. Other towns have their institutions and centres of interest and pride. But this is

yours. This belongs to your treasures of tradition and memory. This is your town and your story, this is the possession of which no other town can deprive you.

Rufus Choate tells us in his eulogy of Webster that, in ending his famous plea for Dartmouth College, the orator melted Judge Marshall and his associates and the whole court to tears by his allusion to the little country college, "a small college, sir, but there are those who love it." That feeling invests this town, as in some form it endears every town to its children. Here and not elsewhere George Clinton was inaugurated. Here his famous nephew De Witt Clinton was prepared for college, and that preparation of the youth for college gave the immediate occasion of the reorganization after the war of the only college in the State. Professor Renwick says that in 1784, when De Witt Clinton, after two years' study in this Academy, reached New York from Kingston on his way to Princeton College in New Jersey, it seemed to be a public disgrace that the nephew of the Governor of New York and the son of one of the most distinguished citizens of the State, should be obliged to go out of the State to complete his education. The feeling was so profound that it led to the reopening of Kings College under its more patriotic name, and De Witt Clinton was the first matriculated student of Columbia College.

These are the legends and associations upon which local feeling and public spirit feed and flourish. A town may have singular industrial and commercial advantages. Some falling Genesee or Merrimac may gather about it a humming Rochester or Lowell; mineral riches

may rear some Oil City or Mauch Chunk, or attract to some Southern Birmingham an activity and prosperity hitherto unknown; or a happy site, a fertile neighborhood, marvellous inventions, and abundant communications may transform a solitary Fort Dearborn into the Western metropolitan seat of a world's fair. But none of these chances, however astounding the growth of factory or railroad, of wharf and warehouse, can supply its highest pride to the citizens of a city, or to the city itself its deepest influence upon the country. It is not the trade of Boston, it is Faneuil Hall, the Cradle of Liberty, and Bunker Hill that give Boston its renown and her citizens their pride. Not because of its wide realm of houses and busy activities does Philadelphia command the reverent regard of the country, but because there American independence was declared and the national Union was constituted. The glory of New York is not that of a wilderness of stores and workshops, and an endless fleet bridging for her the ocean; it is that in New York a free press was vindicated in Zenger's trial, that there the government of the Union was inaugurated, and that her bay and river, first of American waters, were consecrated by the genius of literature. If in these Ulster hills some wanderer, like the Indian of Potosi pulling a sapling, had revealed a silver mine; if under your fields exhaustless treasures of iron and coal had been unlocked, and your eager town, turning its riches to its private aggrandizement, had been lost in its own smoke like Vulcan's smithy in Lemnos, your pride would not have been so lofty and so pure as it is that here the first State constitution

was adopted, that here the State government was inaugurated, and that here eminent men were trained in one of the earliest and best of New York academies.

I speak of the academy not in contrast or rivalry with the public primary school, for the academy is only a higher school. The distinction that we draw between primary and secondary or academic education does not indicate an essential difference; it does not mean that the State is interested in one and not in the other. It is a distinction of convenience only, to define what limits it may be wise to prescribe for the public provision of education. The State care of education is taken in the interest of the public welfare; and of the public welfare, and of the necessary provision for it, the State is itself the judge. The State of New York, for instance, does not restrict its provision for education to the primary school. It includes within its beneficent care and supervision the whole system of colleges, academies, and secondary schools, not indeed to the same degree as the primary schools, but for the same purpose, namely, the public welfare, and upon the same principle, namely, the duty of promoting it. The maxim imputed to Jefferson, the best government is that which governs least, like all such absolute generalizations, in order to be true must be interpreted intelligently. Applying to it his own principle of strict construction, it would sweep away both the public school and the post-office, the twin columns of public intelligence upon which the fabric of popular government rests. Jefferson was a practical statesman just in the degree that he disregarded the absolutism of his own maxim. The latest, most thor-

ough, and ablest of the historians of his administration, Mr. Henry Adams, with complete justice to Mr. Jefferson's qualities, shows how comprehensive was this disregard. Mr. Bancroft, who delighted to call himself a Jeffersonian, pointed out to me, but a few years since, that Mr. Jefferson, in his last message to Congress on the 8th of November, 1808, recommended, in view of a treasury surplus, that the revenue should not be reduced, but appropriated "to the improvement of roads, canals, rivers, education, and other great foundations of prosperity and union." The voice is Jefferson's voice, but the hands are the hands of Hamilton.

It is because New York, in common with her sister States, holds with the old Dutch State of Zealand that "education is the foundation of the commonwealth" that, while providing munificently for the primary schools, she does not restrict her interpretation of education to the knowledge conveyed in those schools, but includes within its rightful significance and to a certain degree the secondary schools. It is with the same wise view that the Legislature at its late session made an appropriation for the system of University extension, which is simply a scheme for bringing the college, so far as practicable, to citizens in every part of the State who are unable to go to the college. The colleges of the State, in concert with the University of the State, which is the official head of the system of higher education, unite with the authority and aid of the State in an organized system of lectures and examinations to extend higher education throughout the State. Such a system, indeed, does not abolish the

public school nor supersede the college nor give to its students the advantage of college residence. But in every community in the State which desires the benefit it gives to the graduate of the public school who is already engaged in the active work of life an alluring incitement to devote his leisure hours to study; and thus, by opening more widely diffused opportunities of education, by bringing the good tidings of larger knowledge to the remote village and the farmer's boy, who otherwise must lose it, it assures a more educated people and a nobler commonwealth. No recent legislation upon the subject is more important and significant. It is another illustration of the large comprehensive and sagacious spirit which is placing New York in the van of educational progress.

We must emancipate ourselves from the delusion that the concern of the State begins and ends with the primary school, or that the State provides for the education of all its children that they may be able only to read a newspaper, to keep an account, and to make out a bill. The public end of education, indeed, is not to make accountants or engineers, or specialists of any kind, but enlightened, patriotic, upright, public-spirited citizens. In primary education we give the children keys and tools, but our duty includes showing how to use them. To teach a child to read is indispensable, but to teach him to read is not to teach him to read with profit. Yet one is as much a part of education as the other, and the public good-sense that sustains the school, not a rigid theory of the limited function of the State, must determine the limits of in-

struction. Moderation, says Bacon, must be the rule; but an occasional excess, he says, is wise.

Higher education is of the highest concern to the State, because higher education is only more education, larger knowledge, completer training. There is no point in education at which indispensable knowledge ends and fanciful knowledge begins. Pope's sparkling gibe, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," is a caustic fling at smatterers. But all knowledge is comparative. The knowledge of great specialists and scholars is only larger than that of those who know less. The contemporaneous knowledge of science which Pope himself revered has been long since superseded, and, measured by the science of to-day, is the merest little knowledge which Pope derided. Even while the poet was writing the line, the profoundest scientific scholar in England, Sir Isaac Newton, was saying with the sublime modesty of greatness, "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a little boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

Higher education means only more education, and the argument for education is not only an argument for the primary school, but for the academy, the college, and the university. The more languages a man hath, the more man is he. If it be well to know a little Latin or a little German or a little French, it must be better to know more of them; and if a man's mental horizon is widened, his moral powers quickened,

and his service to mankind enlarged by conversing with the creative genius of all time, by familiarity with Homer and Dante and Shakespeare and Cervantes, his manhood will be the more ennobled if to this power he can add the skill to bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades or loose the bands of Orion.

Before our civil war the public man who proposed to estimate the value of the Union was popularly scorned as a political parricide. He was calculating the life of his parent. To the public instinct the life of the Union was a sacred life and therefore incalculable. Such also in this country is the value of education. We pay it instinctive reverence. In the remote village when the farmer's boy returns to his native hills a scholar of renown, I have seen the respect that follows him, as if every citizen were conscious of more reasons for pride in the village, and for a sense of greater dignity in every villager. If any American should ask of what use is all this education, the question would be as bewildering as if the traveller along this river should ask of what use is all this glorious landscape of the Hudson, of what use to know that it was the gleaming pathway of Western empire, that yonder Hendrick Hudson sought for a shorter passage to the Indies, and that holding that shining water the British crown hoped to hold America. What could Numa have answered if Egeria had asked him what was the use of loving her? What could Galileo have answered if the Inquisition had asked him what is the use of measuring the courses of the stars? What Shakespeare, if he had been asked the use of revealing in immortal verse the secret play of

the human soul? What shall we answer if we are asked the use of hearing the tale of Troy divine, of listening to Plato in the garden, to Aristotle in the grove?

Or again, what is the reply if we are asked what is the use of tracing the laws that govern exchanges, prices, currency, money? What is the use of comparing the problems of State socialism and nationalism with those of individualism and the old *laissez-faire?* What is the use of studying the great question of immigration, and of deciding whether we can rightfully risk, by admitting within our gates vast masses of unassimilated and alien ignorance and pauperism and crime, the interests of civilization and liberty which have been committed to our guardianship? What is the use of understanding ourselves, our situation, our powers, and our duties? What is the use of making America a prouder name in human history, because signifying greater beneficence to mankind, than Greece whom the gods of beauty loved, or Rome crowned with the imperial sovereignty of the world? These, and such as these, are the questions we ask when we ask what is the use of education? Education is the entrance of the soul into its rightful dominion of intelligence. To make better citizens and nobler men, to extinguish ignorance, disorder, and crime in the wisdom that comes of knowledge and an enlightened conscience —for this your academy and all your schools were founded, for this those schools should be evermore munificently maintained. As plants turn instinctively to the light, the human soul turns towards truth, and every school that we wisely open ministers, however

humbly, to the fulfilment of this noblest of human aspirations. Our intelligence is the divine spark within us, and the more carefully we cherish it and fan it into flame the more certainly will the world in which we live be enveloped in celestial light, and human life fulfil its divine purpose.

INDEX

Abolition agitation, the vindication of free speech, 129.
Abolition societies, existence of, in slave States, 68.
Abolitionists, reviled, 28; defenders of free speech, 146.
Absolutism, universal before the fifteenth century, 48.
Adams, John, on human nature as an advocate for liberty, 104; promotes independence of American colonies, 257.
Adams, J. Q., on triumph of slave-power, 25; heads minority in Congress against slavery, 26, 73; in Congress, on freedom, 329.
Adams, Samuel, 30; showed the advantage of college education, 270; on resistance to magistrates, 323.
Addison, Joseph, 11.
Æschylus, 7.
Agitation of slavery question, the purpose of the abolitionists, 90.
Alabama, decline of, 19.
Albany, N. Y., address on the University of the State of New York at, July 9, 1890, 429.
Alston, Washington, and Coleridge, 319.
America, discovered at a most fitting time for civilization, 48, 49; prepared for the religious movement in Europe, 50; reserved for development of liberty, 48.
America (United States), sprang from ability to organize liberty in institutions; a permanent protest against absolutism; opposes freedom to feudalism, 51; consecrated to freedom; freedom its political foundation, 52; its greatness not in achievement, but promise, 57; needs only enlightened patriotism to fulfil its youthful dreams, 59.
American doctrine of liberty, promises endless progress, 107; founds equal political knowledge upon human equality; repudiates arbitrary exclusion, 113; would give equal political privileges to all men, 114; denial of, in case of colored men, 115; denial of, by Senator Douglas's doctrine of the rule of the majority, 116; asserts that worth makes the man, 155.
American Doctrine of Liberty, the (Address IV.), 97–125.
American foreign ministers, apologists for Southern policy, 132.
American literature, influence of Bryant and Irving upon, 404.
American republic, its strength to be found in local authority, 471.
American Woman-Suffrage Association, address before, May 12, 1870, 217.
Andersonville, Northern soldiers starved and maddened at, 174, 212.
Andrew Johnson, impeachment of, 276.
Anneke Jans, 254.
Anthony, Miss Susan B., on rights of women, 191.
Anti-Slavery Standard, address on Patriotism published in, 38.
Appomattox Court-house, surrender of Gen. Robert E. Lee at, April 9, 1865, 175.
Ascham, Roger, 11.
Athens, liberty in, the possession of a few, 101.
Avery, Miss, proves her right to practise medicine, 228.

Bancroft, George, on government as an experiment in U. S., 327; on Jefferson's surplus policy, 477.
Barbauld, Mrs., on empire of women, 407.
Barnard, President of Columbia College, N. Y., on statistics of education, 364.
Beecher, Miss Catherine, founds school for young women at Hartford, Conn., 409.
Behn, Aphra, 375.
Belle-Isle, prison of, Northern soldiers starved and maddened at, 174.
Bentley, Richard, 11.
Benton, Sen., his warning against Southern leaders, 133.
Bill of 1798 regarding slavery in territories, 22.
Blackwell, Misses, prove their right to practise medicine, 228.
Blanc, Louis, on John Bright, 256.
Bonheur, Rosa, proves her right to paint, 228.
Boston, courts slave-power, 30; merchants of, mob an abolition editor, 81; asks Sen. Toombs to speak on slavery, 87; first American newspaper published in, 1764, 300; high-school for girls in, 410, 411, 418.
Botelier, Dr., quoted by Walton on the strawberry, 243.
Bourbon tyranny, 8.
Bradford, William, issues the first newspaper in N. Y., 1725, 295.
Breckinridge, J. C., of Ky., candidate for the Presidency, 175.
Bright, John, represented American union and liberty in Parliament, 256.
Broadhurst, Thomas, his work, "Advice to Young Ladies on the Improvement of the Mind," 409.
Brown, John, attempt to raise revolt among the negroes, October, 1859; his capture and death, 62; an illustrious fanatic, 146.
Brown University, Providence, R. I., address before, 38, 315.
Browne, Sir Thomas, his scholarly seclusion in civil war, 319.
Buchanan, James, the proslavery nominee for President in June, 1856, 2; elected as proslavery candidate, 1856, 38; steady progress of proslavery party in his administration, 62; voted when Senator to tamper with the mails to benefit slavery, 73; on protection of slavery leaders, 86; elected by South, 136; plotted piracy, 141; on State and National rights, 160.
Buckle, his "History of Civilization in England," quoted on abuse of power by class, 193; on Roman treatment of women as things, 221.
Burgoyne, Gen., march from Canada in 1777, 463.
Burke, Edmund, could not indict a whole people, 146; on compromise, 166; his impeachment of Hastings, 320; on taxation of the Colonies, 435.

Cabot, Sebastian, 50.
Cabral, 50.
Calhoun, J. C., member of the Cabinet in Administration of Pres. Monroe, 25; opposes antislavery petitions in 1835, 26; attempts in 1850 to subvert the Constitution, 77, 78; his speeches awaken public opinion, 83; the apostle of the Southern Policy, devoted his life to demoralization of national character, 128; his purpose to stifle debate, 128; gained over the Church, the college, parties, trade, fashion, against the government, 130; assurance in South that his work was done, 137; what he accomplished between 1833 and 1860, 139; an illustrious fanatic, 146.
Campaign of 1856, oration delivered by G. W. Curtis in, 2.
Capua, enervates Hannibal's army, 43.
Cartier, 50.
Caste, struggle in America to overthrow, famous fighters against, 153; maintenance of, intended by South, 168; must be maintained, say the governors and legislatures of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, in Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, California, Minnesota, Oregon, Kansas, Wisconsin, Missouri,

West Virginia, 171; change regarding the Jews in England, 174; Andrew Johnson on; compared to a glacier, 175; dissolution of, 176.
Chamber of Commerce of New York, address before, 393.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. Joseph, M.P., at New York Chamber of Commerce annual banquet, 1887, 392.
Channing, W. E., in slavery agitation, 329.
Chatham, Lord, view of the Continental Congress, 381; on Constitutional Convention, 472.
Choate, Rufus, eulogy on Webster, 474.
Cholera, divine vengeance upon uncleanliness; danger of, in 1864, 164.
Church, the, its repression of freedom, 11.
Cincinnati, Society of the, founded at Fishkill-on-Hudson, 402.
Cincinnatus, the ideal citizen, 17.
Civil War, its results,—unity, power, equal rights, 168; influence of women in, 210; part of the scholar in, 329–331.
Class prosperity, its tendency to laxity of principle, 8.
Clay, Henry, protests against extension of slave territory, 29; on compromise with slavery, 78.
Clergy, the, attitude towards slavery, 75, 80.
Clinton, Gen. James, regent of the University of the State of New York, 354.
Clinton, Gov. De Witt, of N. Y., on Athenian criticism, 278; first candidate for admission to the University of the State of New York, 1784, 354; education of, 474.
Clinton, Gov. George, of N. Y., encourages education in N. Y., 352, 353; Chancellor of the University of the State of New York, in 1784, 354, 356; on Education in N. Y., 463.
Clinton, Sir Henry, Revolutionary campaign of, 463.
Cobb, Mr., of Ga., on disunion, 24.
Cobbler of Agawam, on immoral laws, 54.
Coleridge, S. T., on Art, 319.
College Commencement, its significance, 263.
College, the, its representation in Constitutional Convention, 325; debt of the American to Cambridge and Oxford, 344; condition of the Colonial, 345; work of the Colonial, 350; graduates of, as leaders of the Revolution, 351; Vassar, the first endowed for women, 1865, 405.
Colonial history, its unattractiveness, 384.
Columbus, Washington Irving on his discovery of America, 46.
Commonwealth, the Boston, article by E. E. Hale regarding G. W. Curtis, 240.
Compromise, insisted upon by trade, Burke on, 166.
Compromise of 1850, 77, 78.
Congress, its first meeting and slavery, 21; allows slavery in Mississippi, 25; protests against slave-trade in 1774, 68; restores prohibition of slavery in territories in 1785, 68; on slavery, 69; majority of every committee devoted to slavery, 74; its control by slave-party, 133.
Congress of the old Confederation, 20.
Constitution, the, and slavery, 20; declared to nationalize slavery, 27; recognizes equal rights of all men, 69; designed the gradual abolition of slavery, 69, 70, 71; Calhoun's attempt in 1850 to subvert, 77; debate on, regarding slavery, 78; asserted to be in favor of both parties, 92; clothes the President with almost absolute power in time of war, 113; development of, through Switzerland and England, 405; condemned by R. H. Lee, 331.
Constitutional Amendment, abolishes slavery, 150.
Constitutional Convention, number of college graduates in, 325, 351; its enduring work, 381.
Constitutional Convention of New York State, held at Albany, July 19, 1867, 180; at Seneca Falls, N. Y., 1848, opens discussion of woman-suffrage, 181.
Constitutional liberty, modern struggle for, illustrated, 459.

Continental Congress, its last words on the rights of human nature, 107; how it appeared to Lord Chatham, 381.
Convention of 1787, temptation of, to enforce uniformity in government, 471.
Cooper, Dr., vanquished in debate by Alexander Hamilton, 350.
Corlaer, Arent Van, his fair dealing with Indians, 291.
Cornell, Ezra, anecdote of, concerning Latin, 416.
Corruption, the twin of cowardice, 9; makes great States impossible, 276.
Cortereal, 50.
Cosby, Gov., of New York, removes chief-justice in 1732, 296; attempts to destroy freedom of the press, 310.
Cotton-gin, the, thwarts design of the Constitution regarding slavery; its effect upon slavery and the Constitution, 71.
Cowardice, moral, commercial success tends towards, 57; will not thwart progress to liberty and law, 59.
Curtis, Judge Benjamin, corrects false history of Judge Taney, 172.
Curtis, G. W., editorial note upon his letter on publication of his addresses, vii; his spirit and character; after-dinner speeches, viii; a leader of public opinion, his influence in politics, 2; engaged in confirming antislavery sentiment, 1856, 38; address in Brooklyn, N. Y., 62; in Philadelphia under difficulties, 63; amendment of, in Constitutional Convention of N. Y. to include women in the right of suffrage, 181; article on, by E. E. Hale in Boston *Commonwealth*, Sept. 10, 1892, 240.
Curran, on liberty in England, 102.

Dall, Mrs. C. H., on fitness of women to give evidence, 205.
Dartmouth College, Hanover, N. H., address before, 38.
Darwin, 316.
Davis, Jefferson, declares the South seceded to get rid of the rule of the majority, 128.
Democracy in America, the political aspect of the Reformation, 51.
Democracy, name adopted by the South, 137.
Democratic party, in alliance with slave-party in 1850, 83.
Democratic House of Representatives, should provide settlement of Hayes-Tilden election difficulty, 248.
De Quincey, on Dr. Parr, 319.
De Tocqueville, on liberty of thought and speech in America, 109, 127.
District of Columbia, right of petition against slavery denied in, 26.
Disunion, threatened by slave-power, 23; cried by Calhoun and slave-power, 26.
Dongan Charter of New York in 1683, 292.
Douglas, Sen. Stephen A., his Kansas settlement bill, 31; speaks in Memphis on distinction between white men and black in regard to Liberty, 66; on recognition of slavery by law, 67; facts unmentioned by, in his proslavery speeches, 68; asserts that the slave-party is the national party, 86; on Southern treatment of antislaveryites, 87; on extension of slavery in territories; his doctrine that there are no rights anterior to governments, speaks at Memphis and Columbus, 88; his frenzy to be President; his doctrine of the rule of the majority, applied to slavery in the territories, 117; on right of majority to deprive the minority of all rights, 189.
Duty of the American Scholar, the (Address I.), 3–35.

Education, a power in human affairs, 264; Theodore Parker on duty of educated men, 144, 264; real in self-made men, 270; advantages of a college, 271; not incompatible with mastery of men and efficiency of administration, 272; false distrust of, in America, 317; laid foundations of American Republic, 327; its influence on the majority and corruption in politics, 334, 335, 336; its relation to politics, 351; advantages of the higher, 364–366;

Noah Webster on, in U. S., in 1800 ; George Ticknor on, in Boston, 408 ; its relation to material prosperity, 451 ; its ministry, greatest to the soul, 452 ; relation of the State to, 478 ; advantages of, 479–482 ; and practical life, 480, 481.
Education of women, growth of interest in, since 1800 ; in Prussia, 407 ; Mrs. John Adams on, in 1790, 408 ; Sydney Smith on, 409 ; schools for, 409, 410 ; Boston High-school for Girls closed because of expense ; Oberlin College founded 1834, 411 ; other colleges for women, 412 ; Matthew Vassar on, 417, 418 ; progress of, illustrated by colleges in U.S., England, Germany, France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, 419, 420.
EDUCATION AND LOCAL PATRIOTISM (Address XIX.), 455–482.
Election of 1864, anticipated troubles in, 159.
Elections, and party spirit, 309.
Ellsworth, Oliver, of Conn., protests against sanction of slavery by the Constitution, 21.
Emancipation, gradual, the design of the fathers, 106.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo, on his college days, 317 ; on West Indian Emancipation, 401 ; on Bancroft's History, 416.
Endicott, Gov., of Mass., cuts the cross out of Colonial flag, 258.
England, liberty in, condition of her farm laborers, 102 ; sympathy of, with the Rebellion, 103 ; in the Reformation, 374 ; her attitude towards slavery and liberty, 375.
ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACE, THE (Address XVI.), 393–397.
English-speaking race, the, founder of commonwealths, pioneer of progress, 393 ; its material achievements, defender of liberty, 394 ; development in New England, 395 ; universal misfortune of its division and alienation, 396 ; defence of constitutional liberty committed to, 397.
English universities, described, famous men of, 439, 440 ; Goldwin Smith on, 440.
Enterprise, its achievements in America, 57.
Equality of birth, discussion of, 105.
Equal rights, cannot be compromised, 166.
Europe, sends ablest correspondent to U. S., 139 ; believed in Southern triumph, 141.
Everett, Edward, on Daniel Webster's belief in ultimate freedom, 70 ; when Gov. of Mass., in 1836, counsels silence on slavery, 74–81.
Exclusion, arbitrary, tends towards despotism, 114.

FAIR PLAY FOR WOMEN (Address VIII.), 215–238.
Faneuil Hall, attempt to suppress free speech in, 280.
Fathers of the Republic, their declaration on liberty for all men, 67.
Fawcett, Miss Philippa, wins highest honor of Cambridge (Eng.) University, 442.
Federal party, its majority in Congress ; administered govt. for slave-class, 27.
Fletcher of Saltoun, on the songs and laws of a people, 126.
Florida, ceded to U.S. by Spain, 25.
Forefathers' Society of New York, address before, by G. W. Curtis, 240.
France, despotism in, 470.
Franklin, Benj., pres. of first abolition society, 20 ; heads antislavery petition to First Congress, 21 ; plan of colonial union proposed in Albany Congress by, 1754, 348.
Freedmen's Bureau at Washington, established to secure their rights to negroes, 170.
Freedom necessary to moral respect, 17.
Freedom of speech, 6 ; asserted by the scholar, 10 ; attempt to suppress in Philadelphia, 1859 ; suppressed, 1860, 63 ; De Tocqueville on, 109, 127 ; punished, 111 ; the enemy of the Southern Policy, 145 ; defended by abolitionists, 146 ; the bulwark of Union, 147 ; attempt to suppress, in Boston, 280.
Freedom of thought, necessary to

progress and civilization, 6; asserted by the scholar, 10.
Freedom, party of, its majority in Congress while slavery triumphed, 27.
Frelinghuysen, Sen., on the mission of women, 203.
Frémont, Gen., presidential nominee of Rep. party in 1856, 2.
Fugger, Augsburg banker and Charles V., anecdote of, 449.
Fugitive-slave Bill, in passing exposes the demoralization of the free majority in Congress, 30.
Fuller, Margaret, on the demand of women for freedom, 423; as the type of women in the nineteenth century, 424.

Gadsden, Christopher, on colonial independence, 294.
Galileo and the Inquisition, 10.
Garfield, Pres., his independence of constituents, 332.
Garibaldi, his career illustrates the power of conviction and enthusiasm, 334.
Garrison, W. L., mobbed in Boston, Oct., 1835, 130; famous declaration of, on freedom of speech, 388.
Gerry, Elbridge, of Mass., quoted adverse to slavery, 20; on Constitutional Convention and slavery, 21.
George II., King's College, N. Y., named for, 349.
Gibbon, on usurpation of political power by man, 183; on political relations of man to woman, 220.
Gladstone, disbelief in subjection of rebellion; on creation of a nation by Jefferson Davis, 158; right of suffrage, 191; on equality of man and woman, 193.
Goethe, on plants, 222; Theodore Parker on his services to man, 318.
Goldsmith, on government of workers by thinkers, 189.
Good Fight, the (Address VI.), 151–177.
Government, a science of compromises, 79.
Gower, Lord, on rights of colonists, 188.
Grant, Gen. U.S., surrender of Gen. R. E. Lee to, 175; his tenacity, patience, promptness, 176.
Gray, Thomas, 11.
Greece, 4, 8; condition of women in, 220.
Greeley, Horace, story of, in Paris, 157, 253.
Greene, Nathaniel, in the Revolution, 324.
Great Britain, her triumph in the Revolution would have imperilled constitutional liberty everywhere, 151.
Grote, on condition of women determined by men, 221.
Gutierez, Pedro, sights land with Columbus, 47.

Hadley, legend of a venerable leader in, 382.
Hale, Nathan, dies for his country, 45.
Hale, Rev. E. E., communication regarding Mr. G. W. Curtis's address before the Forefathers' Society in New York, 240–242.
Halleck, Fitz-Greene, his verses on the regents of the University of New York, 362; satire of, in the *Croaker*, upon the regents of the University of New York, 431.
Hamilton, Alexander, on human rights, 104; on endurance of the Union, 161, 162; on rights of mankind, 186; debt of education in N. Y. to, 355; assists in formation of University of New York, 433; his relation to University of New York, 434–436.
Hamilton, Andrew, defends J. P. Zenger in libel case, 296.
Hannibal, his army enervated at Capua, 43.
Hare, Thomas, on woman-suffrage, 190.
Harvard University, influence of, upon the college world, 444.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, and D. G. Rossetti's picture, "How They Met Themselves," 315.
Hayes-Tilden election difficulty, address by G. W. Curtis regarding, 240.
Henry, Mr., Mayor of Philadelphia, maintains free speech in city, 63.
Henry, Patrick, message to Mass.,

"I am not a Virginian, I am an American," 247, 295.
Herbert, George, 11.
HIGHER EDUCATION OF WOMEN, THE (Address XVII.), 401–425.
History, instances of men forming epochs in, 406.
Holland, the drawback of its commercial prosperity, 9; transplants its system of common schools to America, 461.
Holt, Jos., 136.
Holt, Lord, declares in 1705 that the law of England does not recognize slavery, 66.
Holy Alliance prepares degradation for Europe, 137.
Hopkins, Esek, in the Revolution, 324.
Hopkins, Gov. Stephen, of R. I., panegyric upon, 352.
Howard, Gen., 170.
Howe, Mrs. Julia Ward, on woman-suffrage, 219.
Howell, Mr., on probation by witnesses, 204.
Huc, Abbé, on condition of women in China, 221.
Hudson River, the, historic associations connected with, 290, 339, 340, 371, 400–403.
Humanity, its advance, illustrated by history, 43, 44; different races of, bound together by ties of tradition, language, intercourse and sympathy, 100.
Humboldt, William von, head of Prussian school system, 407.
Hunt, Leigh, on Horace and Demosthenes, 319, 448.
Hunt, Miss, proves her right to practise medicine, 228.
Hunt, Richard, designer of the Puritan statue in Central Park, N. Y., 368.
Hunter, Mr., on peaceful change of govt., 136, 141.

Illinois, property rights of women in, 195.
Indian policy in N. Y., 292.
Innovation, in English law and politics, 197.
Inquisition, the, and Galileo, 11.
Ireland, scholars of, 322.
Irving, Washington, on discovery of America by Columbus, 46; and the Hudson River, 403.
Italy, scholars of, 322.

Jackson, Gen., on cession of Florida, 25.
James II., sends bishops to the Tower; exiled, 56; sung out of three kingdoms, 126; and religious liberty, 266.
Jay, John, asserts freedom of slaves, 73; on Hamilton's letter; furnished principle of independence to the press, 310.
Jefferson, Pres., introduces free clause of Northwest Ordinance, 20; silence on slavery discussion, 23; on antislavery in 1774, 68, 84; declares that all men are created equal, 104; on Erie canal, 198; on the Constitution, 328; on best form of govt., 476.
John, Count of Nassau, on free schools, 460.
Johnson, Pres. Andrew, unfriendliness of the South to, 136; on caste, 175.
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, inconsistency of, 11; "Rasselas," quoted on education, 265; on friendship, 470.
Johnson, Gov., of Va., 19.
Jonson, Ben, characteristics of, 11.
Justice contrasted with injustice in their effects, 119.

Kansas, attempt to make it a slave State, 2; its elections carried by men from Mo., led by the Pres. of the U. S. Senate, 31; triumph of slave-power in, 32; the burial-place of the martyrs of Liberty, 34.
Kendal, Amos, Postmaster-Gen. of U. S., robs the mail, 131.
King, Rufus, on Missouri Compromise debate, 24, 72.
King's College, number of graduates, 346; events contemporary with founding of, 348; compared with Göttingen, 349.
Kingston Academy, N. Y., address before, 455; established in 1774; contemporary events, 462; history, 463–469, 474.
Kingston, N. Y., its historic associations, 455.

Knickerbockers, the, 244.
Know-nothing party, proposed to restrict political liberty, 115; its career the shortest in our history, 116.

Las Casas, Bishop, advises the enslaving of negroes for their conversion, 49; repents of his error, 50; his proposal to enslave the Indian, 65.
Law, the, not binding when immoral; of two kinds, relation to citizenship and manhood; power in America to change, 53, 54, 55; the will of the majority, 56.
"Lawe's Resolution of Women's Rights," quoted, 184.
Lawrence, Kan., burned by pro-slavery forces, 2.
LEADERSHIP OF EDUCATED MEN, THE (Address XIII.), 313–336.
Lear, Edwd., on Greek's opinion of women as burden-bearers, 220.
Lee, Gen. Robert E., surrender of, Apr. 9, 1865, 175.
Lee, Richard Henry, on the right to life and liberty, 104; on Constitution of U. S., 331.
Lewis, Prof. Taylor, his work "Heroic Periods in a Nation's History," 265.
Leyden, 371; opens dikes when besieged, 461.
L'Hommedieu, Ezra, N. Y., assists in formation of the University of New York, 433.
Liberty, the object of human government, 15; the contest of humanity for, 18; security of, the purpose of the Civil War, 97; scope of American doctrine of, 98, 99; the possession of few in Athens and Rome, 101; Hamilton, Otis, Lee, Adams, Madison, Mason, Henry, Randolph, declare it to be the right of all men, 103, 104; founded in the natural rights of man, 105; American doctrine of, promises endless progress, 107; of thought and speech, De Tocqueville on, 109; the fight for, the story of history, 152; the Puritan principle, 245.
Lillibullero drove James II. out of three kingdoms, 126.
Lincoln, Pres., unites Washington's integrity and Jefferson's democracy, 113; recognizes negroes as equals, 154.
Livingston, Chancellor, of N. Y., on impossibility of railroads, 198, 355.
Lombard University, Ill., coeducation in, 411.
London *Times*, on burlesque of govt. in U. S., 142.
London University, examination requirements of, for degree, 444.
Longfellow, 316.
Louis Napoleon, conquest of Mexico by, 141.
Lovejoy, Elijah, shot in Alton, Ill., Nov., 1837, for exercising freedom of speech, 130.
Luther, Martin, 48; fought against caste, 153; denounces Erasmus, 318.
Lyon, Miss Mary, teacher in N. H., 409; founder of Mt. Holyoke Seminary for young women, 410.

Macbeth, Mayor of Charleston, on governmental management of social relations, 170.
Mackenzie, Sir George, on women as legal witnesses, 204.
Macon, Mr., of N. C., calls slavery a curse which must be endured, 23.
Madison, Pres. James, quoted adverse to slavery, 20; on slavery in the Constitution, 21; on guards against, 22; on Constitution and slavery, 69.
Majority, the, Sen. Douglas's doctrine of, 117; its right over the minority discussed, 118; instances of error by, 333.
Malthusian theory, the result of survey of history, 44.
Man, his treatment of women, 220, 221, 225, 226; his rights and claims, 227.
Mann, Horace, Pres. of Antioch College, Ohio, encourages coeducation, 1853, 411.
Mansfield, Lord, declares that the law of England does not recognize slavery, 66.
Marblehead, story of the fishermen of, 258.
Martineau, Miss, honored by men, 220.

Mason, George, on peaceful change of govt., 136, 141; in Constitutional Convention, on punishment of national sins, 165.
Mass., Gov. of, favors suppression of free speech, 131.
Material prosperity, its danger, 9.
Mather, Cotton, his story of a Boston Puritan divine, 258; torture of witches by, 320.
Mayflower, the emblem of liberty, 244.
Mayhew, Jonathan, his influence in the Revolution, 329, 343.
Mercer, John F., 20.
Methodist Church, denounces slavery in 1784, 68.
Middletown, Conn., address by G. W. Curtis, delivered at, 1.
Mill, John Stuart, on exclusion in suffrage, 190; on woman-suffrage, 213; on universities and special education, 450.
Milton, understood political duty, 5; the greatest English scholar, 12; gave himself to liberty; his exposure of tyranny; on active virtue, 13; on education, 331; on Latin and Greek as the gateway of education, 346.
Mississippi, bill to regulate slavery in territory of, 22.
Missouri Compromise, the, repealed because of demoralization in free majority of Congress, 30; debate of, alarmed the country to resist slavery, 72.
Mitchell, Maria, honored by men, 220.
Moniteur, the, mouth-piece of Napoleon, 300.
Monroe, Pres., cedes to Spain territory now Texas, 25.
Moral courage and trade, 9.
Moral respect dependent on freedom, 17.
Morality in law, discussed, 53–56.
Morris, Gouverneur, quoted adverse to slavery, 20; on Zenger trial in N. Y., 298, 449.

Napier, Sir William, on suffrage in England and civil war, 218.
Napoleon, calls England the "nation of shopkeepers," 9; founds the University of Berlin, 344.
Negroes, denied political rights in N. Y., 113, 114; their treatment in South and North; a soft, hopeless, submissive race, 120; their treatment after the war, 169.
Netherlands, crushed by Spain, 152.
New England, her trade exceeded by that of Virginia, 19; part of, in Revolution, 323; influence of, on American national life, 381–383; its distinctive institutions, 385; pioneer of independence, 386; influence in slavery agitation, 388.
New England Society of the City of New York, address before, 239, 253; unveiled statue of the Pilgrim in Central Park, N. Y., 1885, 367.
New Jersey compared with Virginia, 19.
Newspapers, their power, 298–302; number and circulation of, in U. S. in 1881, 301; liberty conceded them in public and private affairs, 302, 303; their independence threatened by party spirit, 304.
Newton, Sir Isaac, on limitations of knowledge, 479.
NEW YORK AND ITS PRESS (Address XII.), 289–312.
New York, colored men denied equal rights in, 114; Gov. of, favored bill suppressing free speech, 131; sentiment of capitalists and politicians in, 139, 140; property rights of women in, by bill of 1860, 195; indifference to its history, 289, 290; Indian policy in, 291; Dongan Charter in 1683, 292; first opposed taxation and stamp acts of England, first spoke for Colonial independence, first non-importation agreement against Great Britain, 293; historic incidents in, 294; *Weekly Journal*, issued in 1733, 296; *Daily Journal*, issued in 1785, 300; *Herald*, in 1835, 301; slow development of the higher education in, 347; condition of education in, lottery law passed to found college in, 348; education in, after the Revolution, 352, 432; debt of, to Alex. Hamilton for higher education, 355; its system of education in 1884, 356, 360; statistics of edu-

cation in, 358; its cosmopolitan settlement, 457, 458; education legislation in, 477, 478; Constitutional Convention of, July 19, 1867; speech in, by G. W. Curtis, 181.
New York *Gazette*, first newspaper in N. Y., 295.
New York State Press Association, address before, 289.
New York *Tribune*, address on Patriotism published in, 38; on equal rights for all citizens the radical basis of govt., 186.
Nightingale, Florence, honored by men, 220.
North, the, averse to resistance, 2; divided and uncertain under Pres. Buchanan, 62; sentiment against slavery in, 91. (*See* Civil War.)
Northwest Ordinance, 20; seeks to exclude slavery from territories, 1787, 69, 84.

Obedience to law, not obligatory under all circumstances, 53.
Oberlin College, Ohio, founded in 1834, first co-educational college, 411.
Olmsted, Fred. Law, on English laborers, 102.
Onesimus, used as an excuse of slavery, 152.
Ordinance of 1787, consecrated the Northwest to freedom, 384.
Orr, Gov., of South Carolina, on rights of freedmen, 194.
Ostend Conference, 141.
Otis, James, 30; declares that all men are free-born, 104; on representative govt., 188; on virtual representation, 192, 231; proposes stamp-act congress in 1765, 294; proposes assembly of an American congress, 323.
Oxford University, its unity, 358.

Parker, Mr., of Va., on prohibition of slave-trade, 21.
Parker, Theodore, on duty of educated men before the war, 145, 264; on Goethe, 318.
Parr, Samuel, 11.
Party, lines of, obliterated by war, 138; organization necessary to, its danger, 272; insists upon unquestioning support, 273; denies patriotism of opponents, 274; its spirit in early administrations, 275; shown in Pres. Andrew Johnson's impeachment, 276; in contested election of 1876, 277; should be subordinated to patriotism, 278; domination of, 276–278.
Party spirit, threatens the independence of the press, 304; menaces popular govt., 305; in elections, 309.
Patriotism (Address XI.), 39.
Patriotism, devotion to principle, not country, 41; fidelity to the American idea of democracy, 52; consists in maintenance of public moral tone, 58; illustrations of, 282–285; must be kept in repair, 470; not sufficient to maintain liberty, 471.
Peel, Sir Robert, accomplishes repeal of English corn-laws, 283.
Pennsylvania, compared with Virginia, 18; convention in, declares conferring suffrage upon blacks criminal, 152.
Pennsylvanian, the, "Union men" assembly called by, 63.
Pericles, on glory of women, 220.
Petitions concerning slavery, Franklin heads one, 21; returned, 22.
Peto, Sir Morton, astonished at condition of U. S. after the Civil War, 155.
Phi Beta Kappa Society of Harvard University, address before, 96; born in William and Mary's College, 345.
Philadelphia, Female Antislavery Society, 24th annual fair of, Dec., 1859, 62; People's Literary Institute, address before, Dec., 1860, not permitted, 63; first daily newspaper—*American Daily Advertiser*—published in, 1784, 300.
Philip II. of Spain, and Netherlands, 152.
Phillips, Wendell, willing to dissolve the Union to save liberty, 160; Phi Beta Kappa oration of, 321.
Pierce, Pres., announces peace in debate on Constitution, 79; elected by South, 136.
Pinckney, Mr., on slave victory in Missouri Compromise, 24, 73.

Political duty of Americans, 265, 266; not discharged by voting, 267.
POLITICAL INFIDELITY (Address V.), 125–148.
Political rights, denied to colored men, 113, 114.
Politics and the literary orator, 6; the divine law applied to human govt.; the science of society; the preacher's duty to, 7; demand organization, 272.
Pope, Alexander, 11; on "a little knowledge," 479.
Popular govt., its power and flexibility, 156.
Porson, Richard, 11.
Presbyterian Church denounces slavery in 1784, 68.
PRESENT ASPECT OF THE SLAVERY QUESTION, THE (Address III.), 65–95.
Press, the, liberty of, in N. Y., vindicated at Zenger trial in 1733, 295; obligations to, in literature, 298; its services to mankind, 299; overthrows the Tweed ring, 300; liberty of, 302, 303; independence threatened by party spirit, 304; its function the moral leadership of public opinion, 308; independence of, defined, 311.
Preston, Miss, proves her right to practise medicine, 229.
Primary meeting, control of, by ignorance and corruption, the fault of intelligent and honest citizens, 268.
Printing, invention of, in fifteenth century, 48.
Providence, R. I., votes for Continental Congress, declares liberty to be a natural right of mankind, 104.
Prussia, school system of, 407.
PUBLIC DUTY OF EDUCATED MEN, THE (Address XI.), 261–285.
Public opinion, power of, danger of abasement of, alone furthers progress, 110; punishes its best critics; is really the govt.; discussion alone enlightens it, 111; the spring of American govt., 126.
Public schools, to be defended by Puritan principle, 259.
Public spirit, implies educated intelligence; relation of, to the republic, 459.
PURITAN PRINCIPLE AND PURITAN PLUCK (Address X.), 253–260.
Puritan principle, its duty towards Church and State, politics, public schools, etc., 259, 260.
PURITAN PRINCIPLE, THE: LIBERTY UNDER LAW (Address IX.), 239–249.
PURITAN SPIRIT, THE (Address XV.), 369–390.
Puritans, bring the seed of freedom to America, 246; their principle of liberty under law a remedy for every emergency, 247; duty of their descendants, 248, 249; triumphs of their principles, 255; led the battle of religious liberty; thoroughness of, 258; settlement of New England by, 370, 371; their defiance of Great Britain in Stamp-act Congress, 372; spirit of, 373, 374; Jonson, Macaulay, Hume on, 375; mocked by Cavaliers, 376; instances of, in English public life, 376; self-sacrifice and devotion of, 377; absolute individual liberty the principle of, 378; motive in seeking America, 378, 379; compelled to self-govt., in Cont. Cong. and Const. Conv.; influence of, on Colonial and New England history, 381; influence of, in slavery agitation, 387.
Putnam, Gen. Israel, leaves the plough to go to war, 34.

Quincy, Josiah, address dedicated to, 2.

Rebellion, the, offered but two courses to the North—surrender or Civil War, 112; and the question of free, popular government, 125. (*See* Civil War.)
Reconstruction, vain without destruction of slavery, 147.
Reformation, the, influence of, in settlement of America, 342; leaders of, 343; identical with Puritanism, 373.
Regents, Board of, of University of the State of New York, address before, by G. W. Curtis, 339.

Repeal of African slave-trade laws proposed under Pres. Buchanan, 62.
Report of Committee on Right of Suffrage and Qualifications to hold Office, in N. Y. Constitutional Convention, 1867, discussion of, 181, 182.
Republican party, first convention of, 2; formed in 1850, its anti-slavery principles, 84; holds slavery to be a wrong, 85.
Republican Senate (1876) should provide settlement of Hayes-Tilden election difficulty, 248.
Revolution, the, its principle that Liberty is the natural right of man, 66; the victory of constitutional liberty, 151.
Rhode Island Legislature, bill against free speech, Feb., 1836, 131.
RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE, THE (Address VII.), 181–215.
Robinson, John, on respect for law, 246; compared with Laud, 257.
Rome, 8; slavery the cause of her fall, 17; liberty in, the possession of a favored class, 101; condition of women in, 221.
Romilly, Sir Samuel, on abolition of death penalty in England, 197.
Russell, Earl, reply to Sumner's speech on foreign relations, 126.
Russell, Mr., London *Times* correspondent, on public sentiment in U. S., during Civil-War debate, 140.
Rutledge, John, on interest the governing principle of nations, 165.
Rynders, Isaiah, supports R. C. Winthrop, 145.

Sanchez, Rodrigo, sights land with Columbus, 47.
Scholar, the, his duty to politics, 4; to every-day interests, 5; popular idea of, a consumer, not a producer, 7; in English history, cited, 11; his picture in old plays and romances; truly the representative of thought, 8; his interests eternal, not temporal; his duty the elevation of public sentiment; a wise if not a learned man; liberty the law of his life, 10; his duty to society, to public measures, 14; represents thought, which is life and liberty; his duty to cherish political freedom, 32; to arouse pure public sentiment, 33; indifference to public questions, 318; instanced, 319; great public services of, instanced; work of the, in France, 321; in Ireland, Italy, Germany, 322; in America, 323–325; leadership of the, 326; in the Revolution, 323, 324; in Confederation period, 325; in period of Constitutional debate, and Civil War, 328; in slavery agitation, 329.
Scott, Dred, case decided in Supreme Court, 1856, 38.
Scott, John Morin, on colonial separation from England, 293, 294.
Self-made men, definition of, 269; sophistry regarding, 270.
Seneca Falls, N. Y., convention held at, opened discussion upon woman-suffrage, 181.
Seward, W. H., on compromise, 78; speech at Detroit, Oct., 1856, on subjection to the South, 132, 135.
Seymour, Gov. Horatio, of N. Y., 169; on New England celebrations, 456.
Shakespeare, 12; song of, quoted, 226.
Sharpe, Gen., on heritage of Anneke Jans, 254.
Sheridan, 138.
Sherman, Roger, of Conn., protests against sanction of slavery by the Constitution, 21; on gradual abolition of slavery, 70.
Slavery agitation, part of the scholar in, 329–331.
Slavery, divided the great parties in 1856, 2; the foe of progress; imbrutes humanity, 15; is against nature, reason, instinct, divine law, 16; disgraces labor, 17; demands extension of area, 18, 19; at formation of the Union, and the Constitution, 20; hateful to the fathers, 21; debate upon, in first Congress; regarded by the fathers as a temporary institution, 21; asserted to be nationalized by the Constitution, 27; discussion of, silenced in the North, 28; planted in America by Las Casas; defend-

ed on the plea of the conversion of the negro, 50; protest against, by famous men, 65; acts for gradual abolition of, in Penn., Conn., Mass., R. I., N. H., N. Y., N. J., between 1780 and 1804, 67; effect of cotton-gin on, effect of War of 1812 on, 71; only asked to be let alone; sentiment against, awakened by Missouri Compromise, 72; its triumph in Missouri Compromise, 73; its political control of the country, 74; declared to be a divine and Christian institution, 75; protected by Constitution and Congress; threatens disunion, its subserviency changed to tyranny, 76, 77; let alone till 1850, 82; has no rights, 84; Republican party and, 85; brute force its only authority, 106; excused on ground that it is a State matter, 121.

Slave-power advocates extension of slavery, 18; threatens disunion, 23; conquers in Missouri Compromise, 24; threatens disunion; its victory, 26; controls political preferment, 27; asserts slavery to be a missionary system; aims at control of govt.; Fugitive slave Bill passed by, 29; its course reckless after the passage of Fugitive-slave Bill, 30; its doctrine that the Union is a contract, 31.

Slave States, have no literature, no art, no progress, 15; manners, morals, robbery, false honor, licentiousness, in; founded on crime, 16.

Slave-trade to continue till 1808 under the Constitution, 21; Mr. Parker of Va., on, 21; prohibited, 23; secretly carried on under Pres. Buchanan, 62; denounced in Va., in 1774, 68.

Slidell, Mr., on peaceful change of govt., 136.

Smith, Chief-Justice, first historian of N. Y., on condition of education in the State, 348.

Smith, Goldwin, on Cobden, 331; on university examinations in England, 442.

Smith, Rev. Dr. W. A., Pres. of Randolph-Macon College, Va., his book, "Philosophy and Practice of Slavery," 70.

Smith, Sydney, on higher education of women, 219, 230; on equality of understanding in the sexes, 409.

Society and the individual, 15.

Socrates, 10.

Somers, Lord, on suffrage as security for life and property, 188.

Somerville, Mrs., honored by men, 220.

South Carolina, its Representative assaults Mr. Charles Sumner in Senate, 2; Gov. of, recommends to the Legislature in 1856 the re-opening of slave-trade, 38.

Southern Policy, aim of, to control the country, 128; its web to entangle the country, 129; result of its persistent effort to demoralize the country, 132; demoralization wrought by, its effect in the govt., 142.

Southern States, the methods of, to obtain control, 137; asserted to be specially adapted for slave-labor, 23.

Spain, territory ceded to, 25; cavaliers of, brought misery and sorrow upon America, 51.

Spartacus, story of his revolt, 101.

Spirit and Influence of the Higher Education, the (Address XIV.), 339–366.

State rights, false conception of, 109; the intrenchments of Southern Policy, 128.

Stephens, Mr. A. H., of Ga., slavery leader, on the attitude of the fathers to slavery, 70; on triumph of slavery, 73; "We build by the corner-stone of slavery," 155; on slavery legalized by Congress, 134; counsels the South to wait and accomplish a peaceful revolution, 135; made Vice-Pres. of Confederation, 136, 141.

Sumner, Charles, his speech, "The Crime in Kansas"; assaulted in the Senate, 2; as a scholar, 5; speech on foreign relations, 126; a Puritan statesman, "There is no other side," 256; in slavery agitation, 330.

Supreme Court of the U. S. asserts that an African has no rights, 89.
Swift, Dean, 11.
Switzerland, the refuge of English reformers flying from Queen Mary, 380.

Tallmadge, Mr., of N. Y., in debate on Missouri Compromise and settlement of the West with slavery, 23; on limitation of slavery, 24.
Taney, Chief-Justice, on Dred Scott case, 38; false history of, corrected, 172.
Taylor, Jeremy, 11.
Territories, bill to regulate slavery in, 1798, 22; prohibition of slavery in, how lost under Pres. Jefferson, in 1784, 68.
Texas, retaken by slave-power, 27; ceded for Florida, 73.
Thackeray, criticism of, 63.
Thatcher, Mr., of Mass., on Mississippi bill of 1798, 22.
Thermopylæ, 4; the prototype of Kansas, 5.
Thomas, Gen., anecdote of, 238.
Ticknor, George, on education in Boston, 408.
Toombs, Sen., speaks on slavery, in Boston, 87; agrees to drink all blood shed in the war, 136, 141; willing to dissolve the Union, 160.
Torquemada, Romish Inquisitor, burns liberty at the stake, 152.
Tory, British, disbelief in popular govt. in U. S., 158.
Trade, its demoralizing tendency, 9.
Treaty of Vienna, and the degradation of Europe, 137.
Trumbull, Gov., of Connecticut, Washington's letter to, 112.

Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., address before, 38, 263.
Union of the Colonies against the French in 1674, 294.
United States, their nationality, 161, 163; progress of, 162; government of, founded on equal rights of all men, 172. (*See* America.)
University of the State of New York, its formation, 353; early history of, 354, 355; compared to University of France, 357; relations of, to N. Y. colleges, 359; its system, 360; appropriation for, 361; relation of, to Department of Public Instruction, 362; moral and intellectual influence of, 363; governing body of, elected by Legislature, 429; instances of famous men connected with; independent of party, 430; ignorance concerning, 431; post-revolution history of, 432–434; made trustees of State and law libraries and State Museum in 1846–47; power of, to repeal charter of any educational institution in N. Y.; relation of, to European universities, 438; relation of, to schools in N. Y., 440, 441; examinations by, 442; convocation of, 443; its power to hold examinations and grant degrees, and relation to the colleges of N. Y., 445, 446; degrees to non-college students who pass examinations, 447; sets its face against the spirit of material prosperity, 450.
University of the State of New York, the (Address XVII.), 429–452.
University, the, cherished civil liberty in Reformation, 343; its influence feared by despotism, 344; relation of, to practical life, 347; its influence in the Revolution, 350; extension in England, 445; appropriation for, in N. Y. Legislature, 477.

Vallambrosa, 12.
Vallandigham, Mr., 169.
Vane, Sir Henry, execution of, 297.
Vassar College, the first fully endowed college for women in the world, 222; address before, 401.
Vassar, Matthew, aim of, in founding Vassar College, 406; representative of public sentiment regarding women, 415; on intellectual equality of women and men, 417; on rising standard in education of women, 418; an emancipator, 420.
Verrazzani, 50.

Vincent, Lord St., on abolition of slave-trade in England, 197.
Virginia, decline of, from 1750 to 1850, compared with other States, 18; in 1774, denounces slave-trade, 68.
Voltaire in London, story of, 317.

Walton, Izaak, on Dr. Botelier and the strawberry, 243.
War of 1812, effect of, on slavery, 72; compared with Civil War in armament, 162.
War, secures its end by force, ends debate, means temporary renunciation of rights, 112.
Ward, J. Q. A., modeller of the Puritan statue in Central Park, N. Y., 368.
Warden, Rev. D. B., Principal of Kingston Academy, N. Y., 467.
Warren, Joseph, dies for liberty, 30.
Washington, on slavery, 20; counsels resistance to innovation upon the principles of the Constitution, 72; on the liberty allowed to traitors, letter to Gov. Trumbull of Conn., 112; his work undone by Calhoun, 137; on virtual representation, 231.
Wayne, Judge, on law against slave-trade, at Savannah, Ga., 70.
Wealth, creation of, not the highest object of life, 58.
Webster, protests against extension of slave-territory, 29; Edward Everett's discourse on, 70; on slavery, 72; on fugitive slaves, 75; derides antislavery agitation, 129, 237; political teacher of Winthrop; on extension of slavery in 1819, 143; plea for Dartmouth College, 474.
Webster, Noah, on education in U. S., 408.
Wesleyan University, address before the Literary Societies of, 1.
Westfield, Mass., address before the Normal School in, 38.
Whig party, dissolution of, 83.
Wickliffe, on the priesthood; translates Bible, 48.
Wigfall, Louis, rebel chief, on equality, 154.
Willard, Mrs. Emma, founder of Troy Female Seminary, 409.
Williams, Roger, seeks liberty, 156; on separation of Church and State, 343.
Winkelried, Arnold von, his heroic death, 45.
Winthrop, Robert C., on Republican party as the cause of Civil War, 143; on discussion of slavery, 144; contrasted with Theodore Winthrop, 145.
Winthrop, Theodore, contrasted with Robert C. Winthrop, 145.
Wolf, Frederick Augustus, founder of modern Prussian school system, 407.
Woman-suffrage, discussion of, begun in 1848 at Const. Conv. of N. Y., opposition to, the result of prejudice or sentimentality, 181; withheld unjustly and contrary to American principles, 183; should be granted except when dangerous to the State; Thomas Hare on, 190; Miss Anthony on; Gladstone on, 191; objected to as an innovation, 197; alleged to be unwomanly, 200, 201; in N. J., 207; in Canada, 208; alleged to entail military duty, 209; petition for, in Parliament by J. S. Mill, 212; a demand for equal rights, compared with slavery agitation, 217–218.
Women, theory that they are absorbed in man as inferior and subordinate, 184; have the same political *rights* as men, 185, 187; alleged to be represented by men in politics, 192; asked to confide in men because of identical interests, 194; advantages of the ballot to, 196, 197; first recognized as teachers in Mass. in 1790, 197; alleged to exert political influence without voting, 199, 200; interest of, in good govt., 202; Sen. Frelinghuysen on the mission of, 203; right of, to sit on juries, 204; Mr. Russell on evidence given by, 205; capacity of, to hold office, instances of office-holding by, in England, 205, 206; their right of suffrage in N. J., 207, in Canada, 208; their purifying influence upon politics,

209; influence of, in Civil War, 210; their rights have never been acknowledged, 219; degraded in Greece, 220; condition of, in Rome, China, 221; in America, illustrated by Vassar College, 222; their meetings compared with those of men, 223, 224; man's estimate of their duty, 225; should be given equal education with men, 228; instances of women who have proved their right to equality with men, 229; sphere of, 230, 413, 414; Sydney Smith on education of, 219, 230; relation of, to the State, to the family, 230; influence of, upon man, 231; law of Mass. on guardianship by; right to vote discussed, 232; interest of, in good govt. equal with men, 233, 234; objection that they do not wish to vote discussed, 235; should take interest in their suffrage, 236; estimate of, the test of civilization; gradual progress of, in liberty, 412; misconceptions regarding duty of, 413, 414; Matthew Vassar on equality of, with men, 417; influence of education upon, 421; in literature, 422; Margaret Fuller on freedom of, 423.

Wood, Fernando, spokesman of public sentiment on secession, 139; supporter of R. C. Winthrop, 145, 169.

Wooster, obeys the call to war, 34.

Wurtemberg, Reformation kindled in, 51.

Ximenes, Cardinal, opposes slavery of Indians, 65.

Zachyzewska, Miss, proves her right to practise medicine, 228.

Zenger, J. P., issued New York *Weekly Journal*, 1733, defended in libel case by And. Hamilton, 296, 306.

END OF VOL. I